

THE  
MARRIAGE  
OF  
TIME

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C. K. OGDEN



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THE  
MARRIAGE OF TIME.

*A RHYMED STORY,*

BY

AMBOFILIUS.

TINSLEY BROTHERS,  
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## PROEM.



WALK in, fair Reader, and peruse my  
lines;

Be patient when you light on what's  
amiss,

And don't forget, when my poor Muse  
declines

*Facile consilia damus aliis.*



# THE MARRIAGE OF TIME.

---

WHEN I set out to join this expedition,  
The age I lived in had grown slow and prosy ;  
So fearful slow indeed, I thought a mission  
To stir up the world and make things rosy  
Was laudable ; for, of all grave pursuits  
That folks engage in to fill up their days,  
There is nothing bears so few and little fruits  
As each repeating what the other says.

In truth, Imagination looks like dead.  
George Eliot's gone: where have we now a head ?

---

For, look ; or listen ; What d'ye see or hear ?  
Say, what is there to-day or writ or said  
To cause a man to laugh or shed a tear ?  
The times have changed since Shakespeare  
charmed the age.

Where have we now a poet, whose great name  
Shines forth upon the world's broad stage  
Like the great William's of surpassing fame ?

Says one, ' I'll wager I can find his match ;  
I'll bet, and lay a thousand pennies on.'

' Done ! ' says another, who is quick to catch  
Advantage ; ' I know ! you mean Tennyson.'

' Bah ! ' says a third ; ' is that the man you mean ?  
He has ideas, and they are fine sometimes ;

---

But they are few and very far between.  
Yet he's the Laureate of our fruitless times.'

' Well, there's Browning : what do you think of  
him ? '

He is a poetic Wagner, so profound ;  
So full of poor ideas to the brim,  
That all who try to find his wit get drown'd.  
Like the famed German of the Nibelung,  
He can't or won't be simple ; which is it ?'  
Germans *must* be obscure ; their songs are sung  
In a loose way, just like their breeches fit.  
Bob Browning, though, *has* bones in his longlines ;  
You seem to see him twist and turn about,  
And rub and polish, till it all so shines  
That even *he* can't tell what it's about.  
There are the Morrises, who rant and bawl ;

---

William, of Earthly Paradise, to wit ;  
Who draws designs for papering your hall,  
And in between makes rhymes that do not fit.  
We've had of late some poems through nine  
editions,  
Which some one said were pleasing to the ladies ;  
'Tis nothing but *réchauffé* inspirations,  
Which he prenomens 'Epic of Hades.'  
In poetry one surely ought to try  
For some new theme ; to be so weak as  
Always on Greek or Roman to rely,  
Makes the poor reader feel he must reply,  
*O imitatores, servum pccus !*

Young Algernon deserves a place, of course !  
The name of Swinburne's something by itself.  
His Pegasus is fleet, but rather coarse ;

Some of his lines are better on the shelf.

Perhaps his sunrise songs should be perused  
Before sunrise, when one is better able  
To comprehend the sense. For when one's  
snoozed,

One's clearer than fresh from the supper table.

Across the ' Straits ' they have a poet, 'tis true,  
A Frenchman to the pith of his backbone—

There's no denying he's a genius too ;  
Like a great pyramid he stands alone,  
A very Jupiter in power. He flies  
Across the realms of Fancy plucking flowers  
Of language, whose rich perfume never dies ;  
But for all time sheds fragrance in full showers.

To poets, we may say, wherever you go,  
You will find the poems of Victor Hugo.  
The greatest of Republics owns a son

---

Whose songs will fill the world when he's long  
dead ;  
Of all those millions he's the only one  
They have produced with a poetic head.

To go from poetry to sober prose,  
What find we there to raise man's thoughts  
from earth ?

Your daily 'leading articles ?' Heaven knows  
How deused few of them are twopence worth !

Your Quarterly and Edinburgh Reviews  
(With articles on subjects worn to thread,  
And not the smallest particle of news)

Are out of date, and long since should be dead.

Of magazines the country has enough  
In all conscience ! What shall we do with more ?

Those that appear are filled with such poor stuff !

(The authors think, of course ! it's learnéd lore)

We have curious evening papers, every day,

For little money and with much less news.

We've journals Liberal and organs Tory ;

Each wears its spectacles of red or blue,

And colours thus the little daily story

Of its politics, which often is not true.

The proletariat *Echo* leads the way ;

It's read by those who live in slums and mews.

Next, the pink *Globe*, like a dandy daughter,

The oldest of them all, but not the best,

Looks as if some tippler's brandy-and-water

Had been spilt beyond the tippler's vest.

For years we've had a paper called *Pall Mall*,

Whose editor much loved to overthrow

Opponents. But, poor man, himself he fell,

As cocks do sometimes when they overcrow.

---

He jumped up quickly and soon crow'd again,  
Adhering pluckily to his old ways.  
He stabbed his foes regardless of the pain  
He gave. I doubt if the new stabber pays.  
Who reads them? That's the problem I can't  
    solve:  
Chiefly the needy authors, I suppose;  
For, he who reads one would, I am sure, resolve  
He would on no account repeat the dose.

We have some writers, though, right mighty men!  
There's Ruskin, who is rather curious;  
But he's done wonders with his facile pen;  
Of late his style is rather furious.  
He writes on paintings, though he does not paint,  
And finds effects the painters did not mean;  
And when you say he's wrong, he says he ain't;

He'd say it in a minute to the Queen.  
Of weekly organs there is one *Spectator*,  
Like every organ, with its set of tunes.  
He 'grinds' on Saturday, this arch-dictator,  
On Monday it's all forgot. If he impugns  
The motives of the Saturday Reviler,  
An altercation of six months ensues.  
This, people like; 'tis hardly, though, the style a  
First-class journal its readers should amuse.  
A so-called social organ's come to life ;  
A worse abomination than the rest ;  
They pry into the secrets of your wife,  
And really are a most infernal pest.  
*Fors clavigera* is very funny  
Sometimes. He poses for a Solomon.  
The Jewish king had more in him for the money,  
Although our Friend is not a hollow man.

In science we have some *quasi*-learned heads.  
There's Huxley, who they say stands first, for  
place.

He's fond of your plesiosaurian beds  
And descants well on every extinct race.

Then Owen comes with megatherium head ;  
He won't believe in what he don't find out,  
Which is not much to make a fuss about.  
For him and Spenser to be in one bed,  
When some kind friend had blown the candle out,  
Would be the grandest fun. They are daggers  
drawn.

Owen declares that Spenser is quite wrong  
To say, when prehistoric man was born,  
That he'd no legs and could not walk along.  
Of all this tribe who revel in old bones,

---

And have an insight into things gone by,  
The diamond among these precious stones,  
Is Darwin Charles. His penetrative eye  
Has seen through more in his good spell of life  
Than all the rest together have found out.  
He says man's instinct takes the prettiest wife,  
And pigs, like men, admire the finest snout.  
Two idle navvies passing down Cornhill,  
Saw in a shop Charles Darwin's photograph.

‘He says we've come from monkeys, I say,  
Bill;’  
‘No wonder!’ says the other, with a laugh;  
‘Of all attempts at perfect human shape  
That natural selection has turned out,  
There's nothin' nearer the gorilla ape  
Than that 'ere pictur’ (followed by a shout).

---

In painting, well ! we've some good men ;  
but hush !

They are very sensitive about applause ;  
If you find fault with Millais or his brush,  
He'll call you names and other things, because,  
Like Leighton, Watts, and all the big R.A.s,  
He is used to being lauded and adored.

He does not think that sometimes the hurrays  
Come from admirers inwardly much bored.

The purity of art is, we much fear,  
Being damaged by your Whistlers, and that lot ;  
The age we live in is an age of beer,  
And painters mostly paint to boil their pot.  
A meretricious style of painted story  
Is now *de rigueur*, and by some admired ;  
But work like that of Gustav Doré  
Makes judges sigh and feel very tired.

Another type of man this country owns,  
A pupil of Rossetti, also good.  
His name sounds not like Raffaelle, 'tis Burne  
Jones ;  
His reputation's high, though, and its stood  
The test of critics, enemies, and friends.  
This painter won't run with the common herd ;  
He's independent, and his way he wends  
In silence ; waiting ; saying not a word.

In other walks where intellect 's required,  
Is the work better done ? for I'm afraid  
The quality's gone off ; 'tis being hired  
People think of, and still more of being paid.  
The real truth of the position is,  
Your great mobocracy is too well fed ;  
Genius is work, and work diminishes

---

When people eat too much and lie in bed.  
What is it, then, in which this age excels,  
If art and literature and music have declined ?  
I think I hear the answer from your ‘swells,’  
Who’ve breakfasted at twelve and lunched  
and dined.  
'Tis brewing, babbling, boasting of big bets  
Wagered with Tories born plutocratic ;  
Who, with plundered pounds, fawn upon their  
pets,  
The ‘hard-up’ landowners aristocratic.  
We have a few, 'tis true, good men with heads,  
Whose jaws, by Jove ! Dame Nature has well  
greased,  
Poor fellows ! For they're never in their beds  
Until the cock has crow'd and Parnell's pleased  
To hold his jaw. Statecraft's our modern art !

Each shopman knows as much as Beaconsfield  
About your politics, for which one grieves :  
Your great snob mob can act too well that part,  
As the great statesman we have named believes.  
He thinks they're too much power allowed  
to wield.

In these great times of travel what d'ye see  
From morn till night, and all the long night  
through ?

The horse of fire and steam speed tremblingly  
With thousands o'er the iron road, a crew  
Of Pleasure seekers : That's the modern god !

*Verbum sap. ; erat demonstrandum quod.*

'Twas at the period when the iron road  
Had spanned our earth and brought all nations  
near,

That the Avenger Time was roused. He showed  
To an observant eye, that wear and tear  
On him, as on the rest of living things,  
Had done its work, and half destroyed his wings.

‘Confound my age! Time always should be  
young,’

He said. ‘The verdure of the early spring  
Should not surpass the freshness of Time’s wing.’

With this reflection he turned round and sung,  
To cheer himself, a favourite ancient song,  
Which he had, many a thousand years ago,  
Heard angels singing as they marched along.  
He thought he saw them marching row and row  
In legions, white and golden, reaching far  
Into the heavens, each shining like a star.

His memory brought him back the harmony  
Of their accorded voices, as it fell  
In dulcet strains and rose to fuller swell,  
With solemn march of measured minstrelsy.  
'Twas passing strange, he thought, that he  
should feel  
As mortals do, when their three score and ten  
Of years have made them shrivelled, shrunken  
men ;  
' For Time is surely something much more real,'  
Said he, ' than just a mortal's life ; and then,  
If I'm to mark the time for worlds unborn,  
And show to coming generations here,  
That I am none the worse for being worn,  
I am bound,' he said, ' to keep each little sphere  
In her orbit ; for if Gravitation,  
Following Time, relaxed her discipline,

---

And gave scant heed, what dire devastation  
Might such policy entail. No! I say;  
Old Time, like others, must, if he's to win  
The good opinion of celestial powers,  
Perform his duty; and in such a way  
That he will mark, not only all the hours,  
But all the minutes, seconds, and much less  
Of Time's divisions; for your natural brains,  
My earthly sons, have reached a subtleness  
Through evolution's polish, that measures  
In astronomy are like weightless grains,  
Indefinite small, to suit the calculation.  
The orbs below, as with great Heaven's nation,  
Where purer virtues are, and greater treasures,  
Must be in order and exact rotation.'

Proceeding with his grave soliloquy,

Time smoothed his hoary locks and changed  
his face.

‘Enough !’ he said, ‘of this cold, lonely life.  
Enough ! enough ! Proclaimed be my decree  
To nations, peoples, worlds throughout all space,  
That Time, like men, must find himself a wife.  
This life’s dull monotone strikes cold on me.  
From morn till night and night till morn ’tis one  
Sad lonesome duty ; like the rolling sea  
That shifts the sand ; when done to be undone,  
Like restless billows rising but to fall :  
Such is Time’s work ; and that indeed is all.’

‘Bravo ! *Probatum est !*’ in faltering tones  
Slipt into speech, expressing my delight ;  
But ere the words had left me, all my bones  
Right to the pith, were freezing hard with fright.

‘ The gods ! what have I done ? ’ I said within  
Me. I’d no pluck to utter more applause—  
I really wished my body was so thin  
That, like a beam of light, I could his claws  
Escape, by slipping through some little crack,  
So little that he could not pull me back.  
  
When dwindling life had got a little warm  
By waiting till my fright had partly thawed,  
I turned my head as slowly as a storm  
Begins, when falling on the parchéd sward  
The untethered droplets shed their wings and  
fall,  
  
In cooling moisture at the thunder’s call.  
I very gently turned, not drawing breath,  
Till I the eye of Time could plainly see.  
With fear I was so very near my death,  
I muttered *Miserere Domine.*

I strained to see, as if I looked through haze ;  
Nothing seemed clear except the fearful fog  
That held its sway 'twixt Time and my fixed  
gaze,

As objects seem to eyes bedimmed by grog.  
' Do speak ! Say something, kill me if you like,'  
Scarce audibly I cried, to cause some change.  
I felt I would much rather he should strike  
My head off, than this way my mind derange.  
There's nothing under Heav'n liked dead suspense,  
Particularly in such company.  
'Twas like a lion's cage, whose reddish fence  
And teeth-marks tell their tale. Can he  
Be such a monster ? Surely I think not.  
He moved ; I shivered—' Oh ! good, noble sir,  
It's not my fault ; you make my eyes wink hot,'  
I said, ' with looking for some sign from you.

Why did you sit so long and never stir ?  
You should have spoken.'

‘ What you say is true,’  
Said Time with much deliberation ; ‘ but  
I do assure you I was entertained  
To that degree, my mouth was tightly shut.  
Never did archer, who at centre aimed,  
Get his intention home as I have done.  
I know you well, my friend ; I know you well.  
Perhaps in you I have found the very one  
I want. But what you’ve heard you must not  
tell.’

‘ I will keep silence, sir, you may depend ;  
But I much wish, if I might be so bold,  
To beg of you to be my trusted friend,

And tell me where I am—I feel so cold  
In these great halls.'

‘ Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ’

Laughed Time. He said, ‘ You need not be  
alarmed.

I cannot find you here your own papa ;  
But though he’s absent, you will not be  
harmed.’

He looked much weather worn ; his flinty pate  
Sat rough and rugged on his shoulders broad.

He seemed inclined soon to be intimate,  
As if I had touched a sympathetic chord.

He had two wings, from shoulders to the heels,  
And a large knife as emblem of his trade.

When he’s in bed I wonder how he feels ?  
I’ll ask him soon ; but now I am afraid.

Such wings in bed are awkward; they might  
crack.

I wonder what he'd do if he were wed ?  
He could not anyhow sleep on his back ;  
Perhaps he'd use them for a feather bed.  
I saw no men, or I'd have said, ' How, sirs,  
Can you, good conscience ! leave old Time  
like this ?

The Avenger's sitting here minus trousers ;  
Supposing *I*, for instance, were a Miss !  
In takin him a wife, that makes a pair,  
What would she think if she could see him thus ?  
He must at church wear something more  
than hair,  
Or the archbishops would make such a fuss.'

His dwelling-place was beautiful to see ;

It seemed to be of crystal, all in white.  
The heavens all round were visible to me,  
All full of stars and suns, a wondrous sight.  
While gazing at the many charming things  
That filled this lofty hall of Time's abode,  
Doors opened and there came with fluttering  
wings  
A troop of angels. Each one showed  
That he or she, I could not tell the gender,  
Had come express with some important news.  
One gave a note,—Time said, ‘Who's the  
sender?’  
'Please read,' the bearer said, with bows  
profuse.  
Meantime the angelic host had filled the place,  
And many more of them could find no room.  
I had never seen such beauty, and such grace.

Their faultless shapes shone 'neath a golden  
bloom.

Some dark, some fair, all were erect and tall ;  
The sign of perfect health dwelt in each eye ;  
A matchless concourse in Time's crystal hall.

The Avenger looked at one or two ; the sly  
Old fellow thought, I know, of his decree.  
Perhaps he'd like to choose one then and there,  
And cry out *nupsus sum pulcherrime !*

Some one I've found my loneliness to share.  
The note was opened and the meaning read ;  
The brows of Time went up as he read down.

'With pleasure, thank you—I will come,' he  
said ;

Upon his forehead crept a little frown.  
Retreating then the angelic host took wing,  
Their faces smiling like a sun-lit cloud.

They gently marched, then all with instant spring  
Were poised on ether, and commenced aloud  
To chant again the song which Time had heard  
Thousands of years, and more perhaps, ago.

‘Listen,’ he said; ‘remember every word;  
I love that heavenly song, it soothes me so.’

‘Now, Father Time,’ I said, ‘tis evident  
You’ve had enough of celebatic bliss;  
You too like change, and also merriment.  
You cannot live without the blissful kiss  
That sets man’s blood alight and woman’s too.’

‘Ha! ha! you dog! your fancy is well fed.’  
Quoth he, ‘You’ve hit the nail upon the head;  
You read Time’s eyes with truth,—I see you do.’

' You see, good Time, I've had experience ;  
I have a wife and family at home.  
I know love's passion is a wary sense ;  
It froths up quickly into fearful foam.'

Time stretched his arms and opened wide his  
mouth,

And gazed from east to west and north to south.  
He blew his nose with a terrific snort,  
No handkerchief could stand such a report.

' Before to other matters we proceed,  
Let me inquire,' said Time, ' if you're agreed,  
Who is my worthy friend ? For I must own  
I cannot guess how you came here alone.'

With this old Time pulled up each shaggy brow,  
And looked a little anxious to see how  
His visitor would answer this request.

He tried meanwhile to look his pleasantest.  
What he requested was no more than fair.  
I looked about, and thought, and rubbed my  
head,  
Pushing my fingers through my unbrushed hair.  
I stood up straight, and cleared my throat and  
said,—

‘ ’Tis passing strange, good Time! I cannot  
say:  
All I know is, I fell asleep one day,  
And woke in these great halls, bewildered much.  
Don’t hurt me, please, for I’m a frail thing.’

Time smiled, as strong men smile, and said,—  
‘ If such,  
My worthy friend, is all you claim, Time’s wing

Will shelter you, and he will see no harm  
Falls on your person ; so composéd be.  
Let not your mortal fears feed on alarm.  
Here all is peace ; Strife has no lodging here.  
Order that's Nature's must in order be  
For all time—so be you of good cheer.'

' Much gratitude I feel for your kind words,'  
I said. ' I've heard you wish that you were wed.  
Some men and women oft, like whey and curds,  
Don't mix well, especially when they're in bed.'

' *Macte virtute* ; you, my boy, are wed.  
You are no stranger to a double bed,'  
Said Time, high lifting his great hoary head,  
And in his face developing much red ;  
' But, like most sated sires and *blasé* dames,

You think it wise to hold in check love's flames.  
Senses threadbare, like worn vestments, keep  
Scant heat in our frail frames; which, as they wane,  
Slip one by one life's links till life's asleep,  
And like Time's sand has measured its last grain.'

' 'Tis true philosophy Time's mind unfolds,'  
I said ; ' but wisdom has a feeble growth  
In concerns strictly matrimonial.  
Like steeds unreined, love's fire its right  
upholds,  
Unfettered by laws ceremonial,  
To kindle ardour in the veins of both.'

' And you, fair sir, I see, can reason well,'  
Said Time,—' Pray let me know your honour's  
name ;

---

For if the number of my suite you swell,  
I must, indeed, of you this favour claim.'

' If that is all the toll I pay, why then,  
Most certainly, good Time, I'll soon reveal  
What I have had from birth as cognomen.  
But one condition I must crave. I feel,  
In joining Time's great suite, from there below  
I must be hidden and incognito.  
For think, great Time, how much the differ-  
ence is  
Between one mortal and so great a show  
As your grand presence makes. The sciences,  
I trow, will be by Heaven and earth forgot  
While such a monster drama holds the scene.  
My mother earth will shake. I know not what  
Will be the consequence when you are seen

Joined to a fitting wife by marriage tie.

Ne'er has so grand a sight filled human eye ;  
Great hallelujahs sure will rend the sky.'

' My worthy friend,' said Time,—' you make  
me laugh—

Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! You are full of chaff.

I feel right merry at the thought of this !

Ages on ages have I wandered on,  
Through endless space, for countless centuries.  
I've thought and dreamed about, and pon-  
dered on

The fate that might be mine, if I were joined  
To some fair partner, who my life would cheer.  
Why really ! when I think what life might be  
With its true ring, like sterling money coined,  
It raises me to heights of ecstasy :

Twould change to heaven my lonely dwelling  
here.'

Time stood with outstretched feet and glowing  
face,

And said,—‘ There is but one of my great race !  
'Tis shameful there should be no little Times,  
I the big bell and they the little chimes.  
I should enjoy my days and morns and nights,  
Like mortal men with their own wives and  
sons.

My joy would then reach to celestial heights,  
If I like men were blessed with little ones.  
O Jupiter ! great Zeus ! rain down on me,  
Your oldest servant and your faithful friend,  
Your mighty favours ; that my destiny  
May be, in time to come, my path to wend  
Towards great Creation's altar, where I may

Receive my other half in perfect bliss,  
And fold her to my bosom with a kiss.'

'A *carmen triumphale* would be sung,'  
I said. 'All Nature would give voice and tune  
To swell the great accord; while heaven was  
hung  
With blazing suns and many a silver moon.'

'Fair sir,' said Time, 'if my poor suit succeeds,  
I'll visit your small globe, and on the range  
Of Pelion's mountains crush the dewy weeds.  
One foot on Ossa's heights would waken strange  
Reflections in the minds of those hard by;  
They'd stand and look and rub the astonished eye.  
From Alps to Haleakala, on your world,  
Would be a morning fly. By Jove! good sir,

A planet could by my command be hurled  
And crash its weight against the sister spheres.  
Your Himalaya to its utmost spur  
This right hand could uproot. The mountain  
spears  
That pierce the snow-clad hills of Jura's chain,  
And lift their lofty points to prick the sky,  
If Time willed so, could not their place retain ;  
But, in his iron grasp must lean and fall  
To feed Destruction, and there scattered lie,  
Like some great galleon shattered by a squall.'

‘ Your power of speech reminds me of my home,  
Where we have men of wondrous talking  
powers ;  
O'er the whole range of classic lore some roam  
And sparkle in their talk like meteor showers.’

'Ah! Your home,' said Time; 'that just  
reminds me,  
I have not yet been favoured with your name.'

'True,' I said, 'my promise, of course, binds me.  
I will tell, hoping I incur no shame.'

Now the time comes at last for me to tell;  
Perhaps he finds me all at once a bore.  
I wonder, when he hears, if he'll propel  
Me from his grand abode, and slam the door.  
I felt uneasy, that I must confess;  
One does not like to tell one's own affairs  
To perfect strangers; who can say or guess  
What he may think of doing unawares?

I'm like most others from my faultful world;  
The record of my deeds is not pure white—  
It can't be helped, the roll must be unfurl'd,

And take its chance, whether half clean or quite.'

' My name, good sir, is Ambofilius ;

My father is a minister of state.

He's often told me he felt bilious

When he had to take part in some debate.'

' You have debates to settle your affairs ? '

' Oh, yes ! Our Parliament means chiefly talk.

The greatest talkers get the largest shares

Of what is to be had. Their daily walk

And daily object and intention, is

To get their family and their best friends

The warmest corners. Then the pension is

Obtained for him who's prodigal and spends.'

' Does Government,' Time said, ' succeed like

that ? '

‘ My father manages to live in style,  
He has a very splendid habitat.  
He earns his share, I think, without much guile.’

‘ Who is the greatest talker you possess ? ’

‘ His name is Gladstone, of immense renown.  
When he is talking you should see the press  
To hear him from all quarters of the town.’

‘ Say, Ambofilius, what is it he says ? ’

‘ He talks, sir, by the hour ; the shelves are full  
Of his political yarns. He’ll talk for days,  
And if you contradict him, like a bull  
Whose blood has been stirred up with some-  
thing red,

He'll aim a blow with oratory's horns,  
And never leave you till he thinks you are dead :  
Prick'd to the quick with his mendacious thorns.'

Time here gave evidence of being tired,  
And stretched his arms and legs and looked at me.  
The idea struck me that he now required  
My absence perhaps ; but where was I to flee ?  
I turned and looked about and showed to him  
That my position was anomalous.  
If I had been a female seraphim,  
He would, I think, have been most courteous.  
Then looking at him with an air of dread  
I said, ' I fear that I am in the way ? '

' Oh ! no,' he quick replied, and shook his head,  
' There is room for many more ; now tell me, pray,

If you agree to be Time's willing guest ?  
You have come here by some deep laid design ;  
You had better make your mind up here to rest,  
And for the present blend your fate with mine.'

The great man rose and offered me his hand ;  
Huge portals opened and a blaze of light,  
Like the mid-day sun on a golden strand  
Belting some inland sea, a wondrous sight,  
Deluged the spacious hall with golden rays.  
I saw no limit to the brilliant show.  
Rising and falling endless sparkling sprays,  
Crested great waves of fire in ceaseless flow.  
We passed the threshold of the entrance door,  
And seemed embarked upon a sea of light.  
As far as ear could range a gentle roar  
Of coruscating cataracts, whose pour

In fan-like spread of silver molten white,  
Bathed with a dazzling shine the glowing floor.  
The view that lay before us had no bounds  
That mortal eye at least could then define.  
As we moved on the fringes of faint sounds,  
Played tenderly upon his ears and mine.  
I strolled along; my feet scarce seemed to touch;  
The mortal heaviness had lost its sense.  
I felt the soothing of my nerves was such,  
That Satisfaction claimed omnipotence.  
Our course was lined with servitors, who held,  
Some salvers, others goblets filled with wine;  
Some perfumes spread from glowing horns,  
that smelled  
Like rarest odour from rare columbine.  
Large pendent vessels from an unseen height  
Hung motionless, the march of time to mark;

From which at intervals took silent leave  
Drops many hued, drops pink and blue and  
white ;

While now and then, like those who deeply  
grieve,

Was shed one larger drop in colour dark.

No word was spoken ; but my silent host,  
His head deflected now and then, to show  
What were his wants and what he thought  
were mine.

Of all the things I saw, I wondered most  
At the immense expanse. For row on row,  
New beauties dawned in never-ending line.  
Far-reaching hills were fringed with orange  
flame ;

High builded temples, made of brilliant stars,  
Showed on their tipmost top a fiery name ;

One shone with blinding lustre. It was Mars.  
Ascending an incline, we left behind  
The scene we first had entered from Time's home.  
The Avenger's palace, with its crystal dome,  
Stood out in grand relief. One saw defined  
The crystal pillars and far vaulting spans,  
Bridging from point to point as each reclined ;  
Upholding their apportioned loads. No hands  
Of mortal, but more sure and subtle brains  
Had shed their power and felt the tiring strains  
Such efforts must entail. We wandered on ;  
A heavenly feeling of unmixed repose  
Took captive all one's sense. Such glories shone,  
One thought alone of joys and banished woes.  
The summit reached, a panoramic view  
Held vision fast, entranced with such a scene.  
Majestic orbs of every size and hue

Reflected all in each ; and in between  
An azure vapour, tinted with the beams  
Of one great golden sun, enclosed the whole.

‘ Is this reality, or only dreams ? ’  
I said, with lifted look.

‘ My friend, the roll  
Of that low thunder that you hear afar,’  
Said Time, ‘ is endless. ’Tis a planet’s song.  
Before you is creation ; every star  
That holds its station, and its place among  
Created orbs, is nearer now to you.  
Your little planet in its orbit turns  
From century to century. The blue  
Surrounding ether, as it slowly burns  
With solar radiance, veils the sister spheres,

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And makes them seem more distant than they  
are.'

' These wondrous beauties rouse my mortal  
fears,' I said.

Quoth Time, ' Fear not ! Time rules each star.'

I see no limit to Time's great domain.  
If all my dreams of glory were in one,  
And with imagination's might and main  
Were added to, till splendour was outdone ;  
All high conception that my mind has bred  
Would, I believe, quite fail to picture more  
Than this entrancing scene. If I were led,  
Through some fair angel's choice, to wander o'er  
Heaven's majesty itself, I scarce believe

My soul could wider spread with the delight  
Which I now feel. I could from morn till eve,  
Unrested in my soul or flesh, till night,  
Here stand a gazing statue never tired.  
  
What life must be, good Time, for you in this  
Great palace, with your fertile mind inspir'd  
With such surroundings ! Sure 'tis perfect bliss,  
Though you're alone. There is no time for care,  
Nor for the thought that there is none to share  
This glorious paradise.'

‘ My worthy friend,  
I linger on your words ; they warm my heart.  
Your mind right well, with good æsthetic bend  
Of apt expression, outlines with sure art  
The sense I entertain of my home charms.  
But Time, as I have said, feels cold alone.’

‘There’s something wanting as you fold your arms,’

I said, ‘when evening fades, and then is gone.’

‘ ’Tis true ; your words embrace my constant thought,’

Said Time. ‘I’ll marry ; I will change my life ;  
Solution of this problem must be sought.

The question is, Who is to be my wife ?  
You’ve feasted, Ambofilius, both your eyes  
To such a filling point, that you must be  
Content to leave the asteroidal skies  
To their own councils, and, my friend, with me  
Quit these bright elevated spots, and reach  
A lower level where we may commune.  
Before we leave, take sight at yonder beach,  
There lies Time’s vessel in my own lagoon.

We will take ship and spread the ample sails,  
And call great Boreas for his northern aid.  
We'll sail to south, and if the south us fails,  
We'll navigate elsewhere ; for Time has said,  
' He'll search and find a wife ; it is to be !  
I here proclaim that this is my decree ! '

I took a last, a lingering look around ;  
My breath welled up within me, as one feels,  
When out of silence buds and grows a sound,  
Which spreads its fascinating fingers round  
The sense of hearing, and quite gently steals  
Its force from keen desire. I loosed a sigh,  
And slow and timid, looking upon Time,  
Let him perceive that I would say good-bye  
To such a glorious, and, in truth, sublime  
A place, with fond regret. He looked on me,

And with a slowly ripening smile, said, ‘No,  
We must depart. It is that you may see  
And share with me the beauty of the show,  
That I propose the vessel. Let us go.’  
Time slowly went before and I behind,  
Through groves of heavenly hues full scented  
sweet,  
We walk and speak not. Tendrils of a wind,  
Soft with its perfume freight, the senses greet;  
High soaring arches span the shelving way;  
Colours of varied tint, well toned to show  
The changing shades, which mantle night and day,  
Surround, and warm, and cheer us as we go.  
At last the measured step with ceaseless tread  
Devoured the distance, and the numerous crew  
Of Time’s great sailing vessel, which he said  
Bent in the waters of his azure blue

And still lagoon, were seen with hurrying steps ;  
Some here, some there, quick moving to and fro.  
The cordage and the sails in lazy heaps  
Lay on the deck ; but one man speaking low  
Gave this and that one order, and by slow  
Degrees disorder left the ship, and we  
The dulcet air of Time's domain caress'd ;  
And saw the crouching sails, that were to be  
The handmaids of Æolian force when press'd  
By Boreas in his wakeful mood, blow out.  
' She moves, and we are off ! ' the seamen shout.  
The blazing suns, which threw their radiant glow  
O'er Time's domain, now stretched their  
piercing fire.  
The ship's good prow seemed delving through  
the flow  
Of molten gold and silver. Reaching higher

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Than the utmost range of dazzled vision.  
Great spires of flame their growing points shot  
out,  
Circling round the ship with deft precision,  
To light the captain's course as he steer'd out.  
The shore of Time's domain grew slowly pale  
As all the Boreades spent their power  
In feeding full the hollow of each sail.  
The sea rose up a crested azure tower  
Each side the mighty prow as we sailed on ;  
And far behind, in glowing, glistering show,  
The sunder'd spray strives hard to fall upon  
The Mother Sea, its home down there below.  
Time stood upon the spacious deck and gazed,  
As one who says farewell to those he knows.  
His grand old head and both his arms he raised,  
With that strong energy that one, who goes

For ever from his home, will manifest.  
He turned to me, and I could see his lip  
Was not in his control ; but like the rest  
Of his good nature, quivered like the ship.  
An impulse stirr'd in me, but I refrained.  
The soul itself when troubled 's like the sea,  
Whose stately hue is whitened o'er, and stained  
By chained emotion, struggling to get free.  
At length the misty line that marked the shore,  
A wordless epitaph to vanished joys,  
Slid into nothing, and was seen no more,  
Save in Memoria's glass, which nought destroys.  
The farewell ended, and the sorrow drown'd  
In thoughts more cheerful, Time said, ' Now,  
                my friend,  
Good Ambofilius, let us look around ;  
Let our eyes search the ship from end to end.

Call here Oceanus, the captain of the craft,  
That he may show the working of the gear ;  
And store our minds with all, from fore to aft,  
Such details as will serve us while we're here.'

Oceanus, with swarthy look, came forth  
And through the hairs which armour clad his  
face  
Gave omen of a smile, as does the froth  
Of teaséd water tossed to mark the place  
Where underneath the real meaning lies.

' All hail ! Oceanus. All hail ! good friend ;  
We mark our exit with auspicious skies.'

' 'Tis true,' the captain said. ' If Boreas lend  
His stoutest ether wove into a gale,  
We shall the mission of my noble sire achieve,

Without or thought or danger that we fail  
Again to reach the charming shores we leave.'

' My heart is warmed with your brave words,'  
said Time.

' Let Boreas and his satellites blow forth ;  
For we may have the east or western clime  
To visit ; needs may be the south or north.'  
So saying, with his eyes Time beckoned me.  
Oceanus before us both went down  
To see that all was order, and that we  
Were wanting nothing that might bring a  
frown  
Upon our foreheads. ' This, good sire, for you,'  
The captain said, while showing Time the way  
To his appointed quarters, which the crew  
Had dress'd with trophies ; quite a bright array.

'Good Ambofilius, you will please lodge here,'  
Oceanus with pleasing smile then said.

I looked about in case I might feel queer  
To see in what direction was the bed.

He saw me look, and broke into a laugh,  
As men with sea-brined bowels often do  
At pale-faced landsmen ; but I took his chaff  
Good humouredly, by myself laughing too.

Our quarters fixed, and other things arranged,  
Oceanus gave orders here and there,  
To his purveyors of the food and drink,  
That they should give due heed to the ship's fare,  
And see the daily menu duly changed.

'For,' said Oceanus, 'I'm proud to think  
That here, on board, provision's amply made  
For every want ; eat, drink, don't be afraid !'  
These comforts looked to and the cabins seen,

The state room next called for a close survey.  
Oceanus and Time sat down ; between  
Them so invited I took chair, and they  
The one and then the other, wished to hear  
(Encouraged so to speak by being two)  
Of the affairs of my forsaken sphere.

‘Good friends,’ I said, ‘tis really strange that  
you  
Should feel an interest in my little earth.  
To such omniscients there is nothing new ;  
And what I know, to you is little worth.’  
The captain slapt his knees and gently grinned.  
Old Time looked on the floor and then at me.  
I looked at both and felt the sea and wind  
Were undermining my stability.  
Oceanus lit up his pipe and said,—

' My friend, let's hear about your greatest men.

I'm very curious.' He scratched his head.

' Say how you're ruled ; tell of your laws, and  
then

Dilate upon your customs and pursuits ;  
What your best people eat and drink, and when  
They gather in their harvests and their fruits.'

I must confess I was not very able  
To tell them what they wished so much to know.

The servants now began to lay the table,  
Which made me feel 'twas nearly time to go.

I tasted something strange upon my tongue,  
And thought, indeed ! if I'm not very quick  
I shall be late for dinner, for they've rung  
The second bell, and I feel very sick.  
I waited and kept waiting, as one does,  
Pretending that I was in perfect trim.

Each moment I felt iller from the buzz  
Of filling the tureens up to the brim  
With soup, the smell of which was by itself  
Enough to make me sick when on the land.  
I put one hand upon the nearest shelf  
To help me up, but found I could not stand.

‘Now, Ambofilius, keep your pecker up,’  
With cheery tones came from Oceanus.  
‘I’ll wager you will like a wrecker sup,  
And soon in eating head the three of us.’

Time felt for me, and said in lower tones,  
‘My good companion looks a little pale ;  
Hold up, my friend ! she rolls, you’ll break  
some bones—  
Here, waiter, fetch the gentleman some ale.’

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The servant brought the beer up from the hold,  
And stood to draw the cork between his knees;  
I felt I was much worse and getting cold.  
My stomach gave a very awkward squeeze.  
At length the crisis came and I ran out,  
Or rolled or tumbled, for I don't know which,  
And was attended by some stupid lout,  
Who somehow let me daub myself with pitch.  
With that deliverance over I returned,  
And this time steady walked upon my feet.

Oceanus laughed loud and said, ‘ You've earned  
Indeed your dinner now ; come, let us eat.’  
Such things for eating as are served at sea  
First decked the board. Imprisoned oily fish  
In pungent vinegar were served to me.  
I looked and smelled and gently passed the dish,

Preferring something rather less delicious ;  
Something hard and dry, a captain's biscuit  
Suited best, and, being more nutritious,  
Consoled me for the fish. I would not risk it.  
Big bottles, brown and green, appeared anon.  
Oceanus could do his share of that.  
His glass was filled and its contents were  
gone,  
Before I'd time to see what he was at.  
The dinner done, and all the things removed,  
They called on me to talk of home affairs.  
Now that my inside was a little soothed,  
I thought I might avoid going down the stairs  
To lie down in my berth. So I began :  
' Good sirs, you do me honour thus to wish  
That I should things of my own world recount.  
I assure you 'twill not be a savory dish.'

'Oh ! never mind,' said Time, ' I know the fount  
From which your tale will flow is good enough,  
I've heard my friend describe such things before,  
So Ambofilius now proceed.'

A puff

Of wind here canted up the floor,  
Which sent both Time and me in search of that  
Which most resembles what they call a plane.  
I vowed I could not without something flat  
To stand upon, begin. She rolled again.

'In my small world, good sirs, we've Parliament  
In two divisions, peers and common men.  
The commons every now and then are sent  
To be exchanged for newer blood, and then  
If what we call a good majority

Backs up the Tories and turns out the Whigs,  
The Tory chief claims his priority  
And takes the reins of power with his colleagues.'

' You have a Queen, I think ? ' said Time,

' Oh ! yes,'

I said ; ' the best of monarchs, pure and true ;  
The greatest potentate on earth ; no less  
Is her position.'

' Indeed, and then are you,'

Said Time, ' a people much renowned for work ? '

' In some respects my nation takes the lead.  
We've many nations, German, French, and Turk,  
Russian, Spanish, Italian, Dane, and Swede ;

We've Chinese, Japanese, Hungarian, Pole,  
Fin, Yankee, Tartar, Irishman, and Greek.'

' You've aborigines as black as coal ? '

Oceanus inquiringly remarked.

' I'll speak  
Of them in turn ; you must give me a minute.'

' Your nigger,' said Oceanus, ' is sleek :  
To get the body whiter you should skin it.'

I thought the captain showed unusual cheek.  
Time gave Oceanus a nudge and said,—

' Now, Ambofilius, pray proceed and tell  
Us how the people of your earth are fed ;  
The things they eat and drink, etcetera.'

‘ Well,

I’ve said we have a Queen ; she heads the State.  
The Prince of Wales comes next with his  
Princess ;

Princes, Princesses, dukes both small and great,  
With their inheritances more or less.

We’ve lords and ladies, peers with coronets,  
Some simple misters who these honours give,  
And barons by the gross and baronets,  
Scarce one of whom knows how the others live.

They live in houses and go out to walk,  
In day-time eat, and in the night they sleep.

Much time is wasted in the smallest talk,  
And those who waste it most the longest weep.  
Each nation has a town its capital,  
Where mostly flock the money-making folks ;  
But thousands live without a rap at all,

And think their cleverness the best of jokes.  
We've men who, like my father, guide the State,  
And when they're out translate Thucydides.  
Like other hives we've drones who vegetate,  
Preferring of all things decided ease.'

' Much eating and much work don't coincide,'  
Oceanus remarked, for he knew well  
' The harder worked, the quicker go inside  
The worker's meals; so that you need not  
tell.'

' Oceanus,' said Time, ' should write a book.  
Philosophy, indeed, is his strong point.'  
Oceanus felt flattered, and his look,  
Appreciative movement in the joint  
Of his capacious jaw, displayed.

‘ Well, then,’

I said, ‘ we’ve iron things that run by steam,’

Which made Oceanus sit up and stare.

‘ We’ve ships that move against the strongest  
stream.’

At which Oceanus began to glare.

‘ We’ve guns which at one shot would sink this  
ship

And many more besides, if they were there.’

Oceanus then bit his under lip,

And on their ends commenced to stand his hair.

‘ We put one wire all round our little earth,

And touch a handle when we want to talk.

In seconds only words traverse its girth.’

The astonished captain here got up to walk.

‘ Our people live by millions in the cities ;

By nature they are homocentricous.

The rich man sometimes him with nothing  
pities,

If he himself is very ventricous.

And then we've ships, feet thick with iron for war,  
And a smaller sort which, built for speed, goes  
(At this the captain dropped his lower jaw)  
Twenty miles an hour with her torpedoes.'

'Torpedoes!' said Oceanus. 'What's that?'

'The mightiest thing,' I answered, 'for a fight.  
A torpedo no bigger than my hat  
Would sink this ship, if filled with dynamite.'

Oceanus was very friendly now.

He came quite close and wondered who I was.  
He made me now and then a gracious bow,  
And said he'd like to know my name, because

If he should chance some day to steer that way  
He'd pay a call and see these useful things.

'Well, what have you got more?' said Time;  
'come, say,  
What you have told us keener interest brings.'

I told Oceanus my name, and said,  
If he should drop his anchor near my shore  
I'd do my best to see that he was fed,  
And that he had enough to drink and more.  
He grinned, and thought that after what he'd  
    heard  
Of things so wonderful in other ways,  
That he would surely take me at my word,  
And when he came he'd have some jolly  
    days.

‘We’ve seasons four on our revolving orb.  
In spring the virtues of the earth are seen  
To mount th’ expanding stem, and thus absorb  
The richness of the soil, whose vigorous green  
Foretells abundance for the flocks and herds.  
The second quarter sees great Helios grow  
Less feeble in his rays, as on he girds  
His gathering strength to shed a warmer glow.  
Aurora in her golden summer time  
Bids him good speed each morning as he drives  
His blazing chariot in the year’s full prime,  
To ripen all our fruits and cheer our lives.  
His journey travelled o’er the heaven’s great arc,  
His steeds with blood-red nostrils tint the west  
With deepening flame, slow yielding to the dark  
Of Erebus, the harbinger of rest.  
The ripened corn and root crops laid in store,

Dianus holds his court for shorter hours ;  
While rising Hesperus, scarce seen before,  
Unfolds his light, the first of heaven's pale flowers.  
The leaf now falls and active Nature rests.  
Bleak winds and frosts hold undisputed sway.  
Dismantled trees reveal vacated nests,  
And winter sits enthroned amidst decay.'

' You've men of science and great learning too,'  
Said Time.

' Indeed, we've many,' I replied  
' From morn till night in search of something new.  
It makes me think of home,' and then I sighed.

' Don't be cast down,' said Time, ' you'll shortly  
see,

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I hope, some sights that will your thoughts  
engage.

Where is the ship, Oceanus ?'

' I'll see,'

He said, and rose with visage looking sage.

' Let's follow him,' said Time, ' and get some air,  
My limbs are stiff with listening to you talk.'

A rolling ship and a precipitate stair  
Made climbing needful, for I could not walk.  
With some endeavour we were on the deck,  
And found the sea was high with foaming waves ;  
Of land I could not see a single speck ;  
The furrowed ocean looked like new - made  
graves.

Time turned himself about and changed his face,  
And seemed more grave and walked about alone.  
This way and that he much increased his pace,  
And now and then I thought I heard a groan.  
Oceanus drew down the corners of his mouth,  
And lifted up the hair that browsed his eyes.

‘Don’t face the wind, but turn yourself to south !’  
The captain loudly cried as out it flies.  
  
‘Ah, now I’m better, thank the stars for that ;  
Your oily fish, Oceanus, was bad.’

The captain gave his abdomen a pat  
And said, ‘Oh no, the best that’s to be had.’

‘Well ! then, your wine was bad, there’s some-  
thing wrong,’

Said Time. He felt ashamed to be like me.  
I looked away and laughed both loud and long  
At the dethronement of this deity.  
So far Oceanus had not been told  
Of Time's great project. And so now he  
thought  
He'd better tell before the vessel roll'd  
Much worse. Perchance, indeed, we might  
be caught  
In some great storm ; who knows what Boreas  
Might take it in his head some day to do.  
Perhaps a stronger blow in store he has :  
Great Æolus himself might say to you :  
Since gentlemen you've placed your faith in me  
Without arrangement for my being paid ;  
I'll still my winds and make the calmest sea,  
And where are you without Æolian aid ?

These thoughts sprung up and yielded in  
Time's mind  
Some other thoughts that made him think it well  
To broach his scheme, that they might better find  
The heroine of the story he should tell.  
Recovered from the shock he had received,  
Time, with apologetic look, came up  
To where we had amusedly perceived  
The Avenger taste the mortal's bitter cup.  
Time seemed to think, with us, that the design  
Of human bowels was faulty, as regards  
Their sailing qualities ; that some benign  
God should haul in the slack superfluous yards.  
Both Time and I were now in better trim ;  
Less hot inside and cooler on the skin.  
He eyed the captain and Oceanus eyed him,  
As people do when neither can begin.

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Time felt more steady and now stood erect.  
Oceanus and I were looking out,  
As people do who are trying to detect  
Small objects on the water, when a shout  
Stung our attention, and on looking round,  
We saw the sailors rushing to the side.  
Out of the water came a foreign sound,  
From an unknown mouth that opened wide.  
A sailor, better furnished than the rest  
Inside his head, pushed through the eager throng  
To shout a welcome to this novel guest.  
A hawser overboard was trailed along  
That he might take a hold and be hauled up.  
Some sails are furled which makes the ship  
sail slow.  
He nearer comes and now has quite crawled up,  
'Tis great Poseidon ; all are bowing low.

Oceanus and Time stepped from the crowd  
And welcomed the great ruler of the seas.  
Oceanus knew him well, and said aloud,  
'A hearty welcome,' and then upon his knees  
He seized his hand, and plunged it in his beard  
To seal their friendship with a friendly kiss.  
He walked back facing him, as if he feared  
The consequences, should he act amiss.  
Time stretched his limbs as far as they would  
reach,  
As cocks and dogs do when a rival's seen ;  
Like Ajax and Ulysses when they each  
Descried the other and, with threatening mien  
And stealthy pose, like panthers mad to eat,  
Struck deadly blows to gain Achilles' shield  
Poseidon and old Time did not so meet ;  
Their contest left a much less bloody field.

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Oceanus spread out his brawny arms,  
The right towards Poseidon, the left towards  
Time,  
Thus introducing them, with rarest charms  
Of manner, which he thought were quite  
sublime.

Remaining each on his own chosen ground,  
They both salute, erect and dignified.  
The sailors open mouthed all stand around,  
Discovering what each gesture signified.  
Two gods on one deck is a grand occasion ;  
So thought Oceanus, who showed that he  
Would try, with courteous pressure and per-  
suasion,  
To keep a while such august company.  
A speechless period having been consumed,  
All tried to find out what Poseidon's eye meant ;

We very naturally of course presumed  
His mission was for something with his trident.  
So far his Highness had not said a word ;  
Amphibious creatures have not much to say.  
Perhaps under water talking is not heard ;  
The mouth at least can't open the same way.  
Time thought Poseidon's visit somewhat strange,  
And by his forehead showed he was perplexed.  
He feared this incident might quite derange  
The plans he had matured, and looked quite  
vexed.

At length Poseidon spoke. He said that he  
Had come to give a warning to the ship.  
A tempest, bringing much calamity,  
Had broken loose and soon would quite outstrip  
The fleetest vessel urged by Æolian might.  
' I warn Oceanus and give to him

Full time,' Poseidon said, ' before the night  
Can lend still more confusion.' Here his grim,  
Storm-sculptured countenance looked black and  
drear,

And Time a little shrunk his massive form.  
Oceanus looked round and thought he'd steer  
For shelter from the fury of the storm.  
The sailors stood aghast with awe and fear,  
Feeling, as if in darkness, with their hands.  
Then all approached until they were quite near  
And stood around in eager little bands.

Time now was sorry that he had not told  
Oceanus the object of this cruise.  
If he had known he might have been so bold  
As to communicate that piece of news.  
Time made a hurried step and thought he'd speak

With Poseidon. 'Twas useless to delay.

How much is lost that might be gain'd by weak  
Minds, courageless to speak what they should say.

Poseidon eyed the Avenger, and perceived  
Some care had coiled itself about his brain ;  
He thought he'd better wait and see relieved  
This agitation, ere he spoke again.

At last Time's hesitation gathered strength  
Enough to push the doubts from his mind's  
course,

And, binding effort's armour on, his length  
To its full height he strained, and from its source  
His boldest courage roused for this event.

As he approached, Oceanus and I  
Made place for his antæan stride, which lent  
To his appearance force and dignity.

Poseidon's trident with resounding clang

Employed the hollow ship to speak for him,  
As o'er the deck its thundering accent rang,  
And made her shake from keel to topmost rim.  
Arrived at decent distance from the god,  
Whose favour 'twas his object to secure,  
He smiled and gave a friendly nod,  
Which Poseidon returned with mien demure.  
Oceanus gave orders to his men  
That the two deities should not be pressed,  
And they accordingly retired, and then  
Time measuredly Poseidon thus addressed :

'O great Poseidon ! ruler of the sea ;  
Creator and controller of the storm ;  
Grant now your gracious aid to these and me,  
And let your heart be moved with soft and warm  
Affection towards the cause I shall disclose.

The potent voice of warning we have heard  
Unseats our better sense ; and in us grows  
Such feelings of alarm, that I no word  
Can procreate sufficient to explain  
The length and breadth and depth of the dismay  
Which rests its weight on us. Let not disdain  
Coerce your kindly feelings ; that I pray.  
Most noble Poseidon, whose boundless realm,  
Your power and majesty so high enthrones,  
Let your great genius direct the helm,  
And steer our fortunes into peaceful zones.'

Poseidon let his countenance disclose  
That Time had reached and somewhat touched  
his heart.  
Yet in some lines 'twas seen (by him who knows  
To read a face) doubt played a part.

Poseidon changed his attitude and said :

' Most noble ! puissant Time ; I must declare,  
Surprise in me expands at your dread.  
Why, surely ! potent Time commands the air ?  
One single nod from your all powerful head,  
I should have thought, could make the sea  
quite calm ?  
  
The foulest weather would give place to fair,  
If you decreed its forces should disarm.'

' Poseidon utters truth, I don't deny,  
Regarding me ; but my first care must be  
The good protection of this company.  
'Tis that disturbs me, Poseidon. Just see,  
I pray, that your great chariot wheels be roll'd  
From your Euboean palace in the sea,

And let your horses' hoofs and manes of gold  
Stop this tempestuous calamity.'

' My horses and my chariot are not here ;  
I was abroad, alone, when, sighting you,'  
Poseidon said ; ' and then, I do much fear  
It is too late to stay my fighting crew.  
When once embarked, to rouse a stormy sea,  
These demi-gods will not give in till they  
Have drunk deep of the storm, and merrily  
Their ravenous eyes full feasted on their prey.'

At this, Oceanus sprang up and cried,

' I'm sure he's going to drown the lot of us ! '

He rushed away, with eyes distended wide,  
Cursing Poseidon and his *ποταμός*.

Time thought 'twas best for them to go below,  
And begged Poseidon for his company.  
He called Oceanus and bade him show  
The sea king down with fitting courtesy.

Some days had now run out, and we were far  
Blown out to ocean by th' untiring wind.  
The billows surged around, each bending spar  
Its music in a chorus left behind.  
The seamen so far had been well composed,  
Nought fearing and nought caring, for they all,  
Like sailors who engage themselves, supposed  
Sometimes the blow would ripen to a squall.  
But the coming of Poseidon made a change ;  
For now the anxious men stand mouth to mouth,  
In hot discussion as they interchange  
A cataract of words. Some looking south,

Some north, some west, some east, with  
tortured stare,  
Pinch up their eyes' hard lids to point the sight,  
And pierce the distance, and discover where  
Poseidon's giant storm would take its flight.  
While this disturbing scene went on above,  
Time, down below, was using all his art,  
Assisted by his new felt power of love,  
To gain a corner in Poseidon's heart.  
Oceanus was told at once that he  
Had better go on deck and watch the sea.  
To Poseidon it was no certainty  
When it would come, or where it now might be.  
The state saloon on board Time's worthy craft  
Held him and Poseidon alone ; and they  
Were seated talking, just abaft  
The mizzen-mast, which stepped about mid way

---

In the saloon, gave them a rallying point—  
As posts and pillars do wherever placed.  
The Avenger fidgeted and worked each joint—  
As people do who have no time to waste.  
He used selected words to fit the ear  
And find acceptance with the ocean king.  
As he went on he warmed and came so near,  
That Poseidon was rather wondering  
What ailed his new - made friend, whose  
eagerness  
Seemed urged along with some strong motive  
force.  
In fact, he wondered at the meagreness  
And importunity of his discourse.  
  
· Now we are alone, Poseidon, let me say,  
My being here is for a purpose set.

I'm on a voyage of great discovery,  
And seriously your aid require. Now let  
Me for a moment have your friendly ear ;  
The words I have to say are short and few.  
Time's precious ; that I know.'

‘ And I much fear,’  
Poseidon interposed, ‘ your stalwart crew  
Must quickly make their good ship fit to war  
Against the playful gambols of the seas  
And travelling winds. So, say on good friend, for  
We soon must stir and not sit here at ease.’

‘ Good ! Well, my story, long and short is this :  
I'm looking for a wife.’

‘ A wife, indeed ! ’

Poseidon said, and bulged his body out,  
As male things do when thoughts of union  
breed  
Desire in them and make its branches sprout.

‘Yes,’ Time said, much relieved; ‘that is my  
wish,  
And now, Poseidon, let me have your best  
Endeavours to restrain this coming gale.  
To you a storm is play ; but for the rest—’

Poseidon turned and cried, ‘Take in all sail !’

Oceanus came running down the stairs,  
And said, ‘The air is thick with growing gloom ;  
The waves are rising and right ill it fares  
With those who are unprepared.’ A boom

Here swinging with the rising wind got loose,  
And with a thundering crash smashed in the  
poop.

Oceanus, unnerved, hurled his abuse  
To right and left, till one excited group,  
O'erwrought with mingled work and fear,  
rushed aft,

Loud swearing, they would no more work the  
ship.

Poseidon heard the oaths, at which he laughed,  
And told Oceanus to use his whip.

The storm came on. Poseidon told the crew  
'Twas now too late to keep its fury down  
And bade the captain try to heave her to.

The angry water seemed with rage to boil,  
And spat with vicious energy its foam.  
Each side and all around with strong recoil

---

The jealous waters seemed, as from their home,  
To be intent upon the ejection  
Of this intruder. Poised as for a breath,  
On one still portion of the element  
She hesitates, like some one nearing death.  
But then, as if with gathered strength and  
weight,  
Accorded to her by the angry sea,  
She falls a prey in all her length, and straight  
Into the yawning gulf, which seems to be  
Designedly prepared, she plunges deep,  
As if to mock at Fate by such a leap.  
The friendly air embosomed 'tween her decks,  
Now plays its part and gives a buoyancy,  
Which out-maneuvres and completely checks  
Æolian wrath, which would destroy and see  
Apparently, straight sunder riven in twain

This noble craft. Although the storm is young,  
Its power unfolds with all its might and main,  
As if from Time his purpose should be wrung.

Time and Poseidon now were on the scene.

The ocean king concerned to penetrate  
And get his comprehension in between  
The thoughts which Time had used to change  
his fate,

With eyes on the Avenger he declared,  
That Reason had been strangled by his friend.  
Poseidon wondered how he could have dared  
To plan this expedition, and to send  
So many people on so strange a cruise.

‘Keep down your waters and you may depend,’  
Said Time, ‘it is to be! If you refuse,  
Perhaps it then will be! And if my power

Extends to wielding sway o'er ocean's king,  
What then will be your lot? Perhaps the hour  
For your dethronement will be heard to ring  
Throughout all seas and space.'

Poseidon scowled,  
And raised aloft his trident with a shout,  
Which brought the Oceanides, who yelled and  
howled  
And dived and plunged and rushed all round  
about.

' If Time dare war with me ! ' Poseidon said,  
' Bring out your weapons and unloose your  
power ;  
I'll wage, if you're determined to be wed,  
Your path of love shall not be smooth one hour.

Great Æolus and all his satellites  
Will join Poseidon, and their link'd might,  
Who never in their greatest battle fights  
Have lost the day, will bring on you this  
night  
Such fell destruction, as your darkest dreams  
Ne'er pictured to Imagination's eye.'

Thus, with a crash that rove the deck in  
seams,  
He dashed it down, and then again on high  
He raised his trident, and with withering force  
Swift dealt a blow, that sounded through the  
storm,  
And vied with his own voice, which, gruffly  
hoarse,  
Had lost with shouting all its tone and form.

---

Poseidon's angry threats resentment raised  
In all the breasts of Time's devoted crew ;  
Who one and all were silently amazed  
At what Poseidon had the face to do.  
Slow gathering round, Oceanus stood first,  
They heard with wonder all he had to say.  
He fearing, fortified himself and curst ;  
In front the trident, he behind at bay.

'Such actions and such deeds,' in measured  
phrase  
Spoke Time, 'are unbecoming such as you.  
For gods to launch in such a wanton craze  
Is poor example to my worthy crew.  
What grave offence have they or I, my friend,  
Advanced to Poseidon while here on board,  
That he should in such fiendish fashion rend

Our good seaworthy deck, and thus afford  
To us, who are a gentle, peaceful race,  
Strong reason to resent such dastard deed ? '

The captain stooped as if he would embrace  
And make this haughty bullying Hector bleed.

Oceanus and all the men looked fierce  
And, as Time raised his hand, they one and all  
Fell on Poseidon, who with deadly pierce  
Drove through his trident, and with desperate  
fall

Fell men and god a tangled struggling heap.  
Believing that the storm was born of him,  
They seized and raised him, and with bounding  
leap

Capsized him in the sea. 'There let him swim !'  
They cried, and shouting, rushed far up the ropes  
To see the eruption of his fullest wrath.

The ship plunged on ; and down the steepest  
slopes

Poseidon with great fury and much froth  
Pursued. Meanwhile, he Pluto prayed and  
Zeus

To urge on Pluvius and the other powers,  
That Time and ship and crew might to the  
deuse

Be quick transported. Now for many hours  
The storm had raged, and Time and all his men,  
From captain to the smallest serf engaged,  
Had had their fill of its great power, and then,  
Through sharing in the sea fight they had waged,  
Were weary and cast down with great fatigue.  
Time prayed hard for some help from Æolus,  
And ere the ship had run a further league  
Against the storm, and right in front of us

There burst upon the whirling wind a light  
Strange forked, and shooting like great tongues  
of fire.

Around by contrast looked like blackest night.  
Poseidon close in front his chariot drove.

The gilded manes and hoofs, and gilded tire  
Of his fleet wheels, as with high speed they rove  
Deep furrows in the wave, were shining bright ;  
And Poseidon himself, with fury filled,  
First crossed and then recrossed the vessel's  
prow,

Designing her destruction ; for he willed  
That Time should bend his knee to him, and  
now.

While prosecuting thus his fell intent,  
Poseidon saw Time raise high both his arms  
And gaze at that great light with wonderment.

The Ocean King, now harbouring alarms,  
Bethought him Time was succoured by a friend.  
The light enlarged, the fiery tongues spread out  
And the great tempest slowly neared its end.  
Time's crew were speechless, and they stared  
about  
Dumbfounded at so marvellous a change ;  
While Poseidon, whose anger was becalmed  
At once by what he saw, kept out of range,  
Not knowing how these comers might be armed.  
With slow unfolding waves of whitest light  
Came forth a maiden fair, of heavenly form,  
Whose radiance shone against the outer night  
Like brilliant lightning in the blackest storm.  
Time clasped his hands and looked upon that  
face,  
Around whose brow was writ *Eternity*.

Here Ambofilius came with quickened pace  
And casting off his taciturnity  
Spoke thus to him :

‘Behold *there!* potent Time,  
The saviour of our lives ! An angel fair  
Stands on the heaven-lit clouds, a form  
sublime,  
Which fills my soul with rapture. I declare !  
In Time’s domain the fairest of the fair,  
Whose every limb is perfect and complete,  
Could not with this angelic form compare ;  
So matchless pure, so gentle, and so sweet.’

So saying he stood still ; and all the rest,  
Intent upon that apparition rare,  
To see if it should further manifest

---

New wonders, motionless were standing there.  
The storm was gone, and Erebus had drawn  
In closer folds the mantle of the night.  
Exiled Diana and Aurora's dawn  
Now hand in hand restored the banished light.  
The stately vessel and its element  
In peace reposed, while baffled Poseidon,  
Completely foiled in his abject intent,  
Disturbs the calm as he retreats alone.  
The golden gates of Phœbus are set wide,  
And passing through the solar tide renews  
The faded warmth, until at eventide  
The ebb of Helios brings cooling dews.

Such strange emotions now awoke in Time  
That he was lost entirely to himself  
And stood on his toe-tips, as if to climb

The air and reach that heavenly angel elf.  
Approaching slowly with extended hands  
And head uplifted with transfixéd gaze,  
He speechless wonders if she understands  
That he's entranced and pleads that he may  
raise  
Himself up there, where she in glory shrined  
Implants in him a passion so profound,  
That to aught else around his eyes are blind ;  
Nor is his mind disturbed by touch or sound.  
While looking thus he seemed to give a start,  
As if a message from her gentle voice  
Had breathed into the centre of his heart  
And said, ' You are the lover of my choice.'  
Then Æolus appears with jaded mien  
Through efforts to control his struggling winds.  
Eternity commands, and he is seen

Descending, as he cautiously unbinds  
His element. Approaching Time, he said :

‘ Most noble Time, my mission is to you.  
Eternity requites your love and prays  
That, if need be with some Æolian aid,  
You for a time part from your noble crew  
And join Eternity.’ He further said,—  
‘ My potent element, at your command,  
Is part unloosed, and ready to convey  
Your puissant self, that you may claim the hand  
Of the Eternal Queen. I’ll lead the way.’

Much agitation stirred the Avenger’s breast,  
So wondrous was the change that had been  
wrought  
In his apparent destiny. At best

His first endeavour would, he fully thought,  
Bring nothing but despondency and grief;  
And even till within a short time since  
He feared and entertained a strong belief  
The vessel would be lost. It might convince  
Indeed, one wielding greater power than he,  
That the designs of anger'd Poseidon,  
To sink the ship beneath the raging sea  
And leave Time battling with the storm alone,  
Would end in harmony with his desire.  
But, happily another fate was his.  
A greater than Poseidon in his ire,  
The fairest of great Heaven's deities  
Had in the moment of their dire distress  
Appeared in glory on the troubled scene,  
Reducing Poseidon to nothingness.  
She in unequalled splendour, Nature's Queen,

Like the most potent of all god-like powers,  
Without a show of force apparent, wields  
That subtle hidden strength before which  
cowers

The courage of the bravest, whose will yields  
But to a ruthless foe omnipotent.

These thoughts, like quickened seeds in heated  
soil,

Responded to his sense of full content ;  
Which, since the banishment of that turmoil  
Whose flowering climax was Poseidon's rage,  
Had to his mind restored some confidence.

His leading impulse now was to engage  
His soul entire with all the incidents  
Surrounding the changed course of his career.  
He turned to Æolus and said, ‘ Good friend !  
Pray lead the way ; ’ and, with a mighty cheer

From those who thronged the ship from end to  
end,

Ascended slow with dignity and grace  
Both Time and Æolus. Upon that scene  
Then fell a soundless calm. Each eager face  
Keen searching for what next was to be seen.  
Slow rising, Time came near his new-found love;  
But, as he came she calmly moved away,  
And all the light around her and above  
Seemed gently dying like a closing day.  
Time followed, somewhat doubting in his mind  
If what he saw was real or but a dream.  
As distance grew 'twixt him and those behind,  
His eyes watched closer the retreating beam  
Which showed him where Eternity had gone.  
At length it brightened, like a dew-decked  
flower,

Which rising Phœbus rests his rays upon  
To gild it while it lives its little hour ;  
And expanding slow, as children grow to men,  
It widened to an avenue of light.  
  
With long watching Time fell wondering, when  
There visited his eye a new-born sight.  
  
Just where the avenue of light begun,  
A smiling fairy group stood clad in white  
To welcome him. More prominently one  
Stood forth to offer welcome to the guest ;  
With dimpled smiles and music in her voice,  
She bade Time enter. Then with all the rest  
This captain of the band bade him make choice  
Of many seats upon a radiant cloud,  
Which, when he'd chosen, they pushed tenderly  
With their sweet voices as they sung aloud.  
  
The eyes of Time were much engaged to see

What unknown marvels might be here revealed.  
He thought the mansions of Eternity  
Would equal the great power which she could  
wield.

As they sped on through endless change of  
scene,

Nor tree nor flower came in his range of sight.

In all the boundless space was nothing green,  
But shining crystal forms and warm pure light.

Some time had passed and his fair chaperones  
Had filled his ears with choicest of their song,

When Time felt rather aching in his bones  
And thought the way most lovely, but full long.

At this conjunction of two sets of thoughts,  
Which seemed their seeds to sow in those  
around,

Some new arrivals with their bright cohorts

Came up behind their pioneering sound.  
Now rose the chorus of Time's body-guard  
To mellowed harmony, a well-tuned choir,  
Who joining those they met without retard,  
Still grander chords are heard as they mount  
higher.  
No trumpet sound nor blast with metal's ring  
Swelled fuller that proud music which he heard ;  
But all came from the throat, as angels sing,  
Nor was there needed for support one single  
word.  
Slow changing as a tribute stream whose hue  
Scarce tints the parent flood with varying dye,  
Around them crept, almost unseen it grew,  
A light that changed the colours to the eye.  
A perfect legion of attendants now  
Gave Time their company. They looked on him

As something very strange, and wondered how  
He came to look so very worn and grim.  
Poor Time's experience on board the ship  
Did not clean his dress, but rather soiled it.  
He thought he'd better just delay the trip  
While he performed the needful toilet.  
So thinking, Time called forth his kindest smile  
To tune the humour of his nearest friend ;  
And as he asked the favour, all the while  
His soul's sun shone its brightest to the end.  
Perceiving quick the drift of his intent,  
A talk ensued to find the best solutions,  
Which caused no little burst of merriment ;  
They never thought that Time required ablutions.  
His mission was a serious one ; he must,  
He no doubt wisely thought, look quite his best,

And try and hide the centuries of rust  
Which could not be concealed by coat and vest.  
As we have said before, poor Time was bare,  
At least in a sense ; there were some feathers  
In his wings, but he'd not molted, and the hair  
Showed contact with the stormiest of weathers.  
In these great regions of Eternity  
There were no signs of birth or of decay.  
Time dwelt on this, and thought about  
    paternity  
With something of a feeling of dismay.  
All that was there would there for ever be ;  
What came, came perfect for Eternity.  
There were no growing things, and he could see  
No indications of maternity.  
His feelings at these thoughts were rather  
    harried ;

His countenance was twisted with some doubt.  
‘What is the use,’ he said, ‘of being married?’  
And then most eloquently looked about.  
His fair companions seemed to understand  
A little something of what troubled him,  
Although they knew not that he sought the hand  
Of their great Queen and peerless Seraphim.  
However, being thus far on the road  
'Twas useless turning back because of doubts.  
A spot where he could wash himself they  
showed,  
And he retired to where high water-spouts  
Were ever growing like large crystal trees,  
Whose spring and autumn-time, like twins  
together,  
Saw leaves just born, yet dropping with the  
breeze,

---

Nor life nor death depending on the weather.  
When well prepared, Time joined the company,  
Who waited quite respectfully close by.  
The expression of their faces showed that he  
Now filled their eyes much more agreeably.  
Before resuming his appointed place,  
He interchanged ideas for a while,  
To see if any were inclined to trace  
From their remembrance the mode and style  
Of living which Eternity maintained.  
They yielded little to the questions put,  
Which made him think they were much better  
    brained  
Then ordinary folks. Then his right foot  
He planted firm and filled his gaping seat,  
When on they sped enveloped with new song,  
Till all the ears were startled with a bleat

---

From one with better eyes, who saw among  
The intermingled objects on before  
The paradise Eternity enjoyed.  
New vigour now incited all the corps,  
Whose voices sounded pure and unalloyed.  
Time raised himself as high as he could sit,  
To close survey the objects coming near  
And see Eternity's domain, if it  
Resembled what he thought it would appear.  
Small distant specks developed as they near'd  
Into fresh hosts to form a new escort,  
And the far-reaching outlines had a weird  
And necromantic look, which gave, in short,  
The mind of the spectator the idea  
Some palace of unique design was there.  
Dissolving slow, from indistinct to clear,  
Now could be seen a shining lofty stair

---

With brilliant pillar'd arches just before.  
Time's leading guide informed him it was there  
Eternity received. A massive door  
Of sparkling crystal flanked with angel guards  
Close fixed his eye, as nearer still they come.  
Loud songs of welcome from the choicest bards  
Thickened the air with undulating hum ;  
And now and then a louder wave of sound  
Tutors the ear part way to the intent  
Of him who had composed. Soon with a bound  
The failing sense required, to show what's meant,  
Dispelled confusion, and the gist was clear.  
Far reaching, straight before and left and right,  
Such scenes and sounds to ravish eye and ear  
Time at his best had never known. The sight  
Now perfected in its details was such,  
That his punctiliousness got out of joint ;

And some who watched him thought that he  
was much

In danger of forgetting, that the point  
Especially demanding his concern,  
Was his reception by Eternity.

He thought of this on feeling his cheeks burn,  
Remembering, no doubt, that he could learn  
Particulars at leisure, by-and-by.

The crystal door now slowly opened wide,  
And moving like a burning lava stream  
There came a stately column, which Time eyed  
As a waked sleeper stares fresh from a dream.

A staid ambassador moved at its head  
Commissioned by Eternity to give  
A hearty welcome to her guest. He said,—

‘ Most generous, noble Time,—All who here live

---

Kneel at your feet and bid you be at home ;  
Each one in your obedient servant's train  
To the lowest. And should you care to roam  
Hereafter through Eternity's domain,  
To paint upon your memory its sights,  
'Twill be a joy if you their aid retain ;  
The thought of it their choicest of delights.'

In presence of so reverend a sire  
Time held himself with fitting dignity,  
And with slow inclination (he was higher)  
His head he bended low, that it might be  
The measure of respect Time wished to  
show.

The ambassador saluted reverently,  
And all behind, like waving corn, bent low  
To pay due homage to Time's dignity.

'Good Sire!' said Time, 'you really honour me  
Above what I could hope to have received;  
To be so kindly greeted, is to be  
Of every embarrassment relieved.'

These courtesies exchanged they all retired,  
Excepting just a few who stayed behind  
To keep him company, for he required  
In such a place some help to steer his mind.  
This grand procession opened and there came  
Another grander still, accompanied  
By music that might very rightly claim  
Perfection's warranty. 'Twas variéd  
With such high skill and mathematic tune,  
As if the harmony, like Nature's play  
Upon the charméd air, were deftly strewn  
By some controlling superhuman sway.

Time stood surrounded by his first escort,  
And either side large groups of his new friends.  
The figure he had longed for had not caught  
His eye, which searched the columns to their  
ends,

This one he thought must have her in its train,  
And close he scrutinized with slow-drawn breath.  
He looked until his eyes rebelled with pain :  
' Does she repent ? ' he thought ; she lingereth.  
A higher still exalted messenger,  
With bearing of a yet more finished type  
Made low obeisance to the Avenger,  
As indication that their plans were ripe.  
With courteous gesture and inviting phrase  
He said, ' Eternity is now prepared  
To give reception to her guest, and prays  
That Time may further ceremonies be spared.'

So saying, he half turned him round, and showed  
The way that Time should take. With lifted  
hand

And finger pointed to the shortest road,  
He smiled and moved, and Time and the whole  
band,

Like a tide breaking from its poised slack  
And moving with unanimous consent,  
Eternity's innumerable court marched back,  
Preceded by the guest for whom they went.

The veritable climax now in reach,  
With moments only between him and her,  
Seemed to deprive Time of the power of speech,  
And change the outline of his usual manner.  
He bent with thought and then stood quite erect,  
Wearing a smile as he would smile on her ;  
Then pensive seemed as though he would elect

---

His best appearance, so that he might stir  
And rouse Eternity to feel for him  
No less than she professed when he was seen  
In a more tragic light, which yet was dim,  
And gave romantic features to the scene.  
At length they reached the top of the long stairs,  
And passed some distance through the crystal  
door  
(A long procession when they walked in pairs),  
Until all stood upon one crystal floor.  
This was the lady's largest banquet-hall,  
Where a repast in princely style was served ;  
Each one took place until from wall to wall  
The room was filled. Time felt somewhat  
unnerved  
At such preparing, for he rightly thought  
The whole of the arrangements were for him.

---

He wondered where from all these things were  
brought ;

Things that would satisfy the daintiest whim.  
One mighty light shone from the ceiling top,  
Whose rays all atoms pierced, however far,  
And made each shine like one congealing drop,  
A firmament with every speck a star.

In these exalted regions it appears  
The human sense entirely has survived ;  
They eat and drink, and, more than that, one  
hears

The girls are husbanded and the lovers wived.  
Eternity, however, would not be  
Endurable with babies cutting gums ;  
'*Nous avons changez tout cela*' entirely !  
No multiplying there in little sums.  
So with the other produce and the wine.

---

To have to plough and hoe and reap and grind,  
And wash your clothes and hang them on the  
line,

Is not employment of the highest kind.

The things required to tickle human sense  
Were brought from somewhere—never mind  
the place ;

Or whether they were paid in roubles, francs,  
or pence,

Or whether, when they ate them, they said grace.

Such things with deities are not observed,  
They only eat the kernels from the nuts.

They're cracked by unseen powers, and then  
are served

By, as compared with them, mere Liliputs.

A fountain in the centre of the room  
Yielded a sparkling wine in ceaseless flow,

Which spread upon the air a vinous bloom,  
Reminding one of where the vine trees grow.  
Cool crystal goblets stood in numbers round  
The fountain's edge, inviting thirsty souls  
To come and drink, and listen to the sound  
Of splashing wines high foaming in the bowls.  
A breathless stillness now reigned in the hall ;  
Such quiet as there is in empty space.  
Some waiting ended by a gentle fall  
Upon the waveless air, which they could trace  
As the beginning of a distant sound  
Of many persons moving on the floor.  
It slowly waxed in volume, and the ground  
Made sympathetic movement, like the shore  
Yields to the restless breakers in their race  
To gain the finite limit of the sea.  
A herald now comes on with quicker pace

To tell the coming of Eternity,  
And as he speaks the sound of treading feet  
Wells up between the buzz of busy talk.  
  
Time gave a start, as though he meant to meet  
His love, and fondly greet her while they walk.  
He hesitates. The herald nearing where  
Time had by invitation fixed his place,  
Persuaded him politely to repair  
To a position where his noble face  
Could by the whole assembly best be seen.  
  
A lofty opening in one wall contained  
Eternity's bright throne, where she, as queen,  
Held her great court and always entertained.  
  
On one side was another throne designed,  
Which had a look of newness in its build.  
  
The sculptured crystal round it brightly shined;  
But no one yet its ample seat had filled.

Time took a place beside the second throne  
And watched the grand procession filing by.  
At last Eternity appear'd ; she walked alone.  
Time warmed from head to foot. Her smiling eye  
And perfect beauty grasped his every sense ;  
And as one link holds fast the prisoner chained,  
So beauty's link in strength was so intense  
His eyes were chained ; yet, he his best  
refrained

From showing to the company around,  
How deep that face had wrought upon his soul  
Its mark indelible. Indeed, he found,  
On searching through and through the endless  
roll

Of his experience, there was no sign,  
Which centuries between could not erase,  
That he had felt an impress so divine

---

On his whole being. So sat Amaze  
Full pictured in the countenance of Time.  
Eternity on her side, Time on his,  
Made courteous recognition, as the prime  
Introduction to all ceremonies.  
Her chief attendants aided her to rise  
And take her place upon the centre throne ;  
While others, pointing with their smiling eyes,  
Invited Time, who raised himself alone.  
Thus, this august assembly was complete,  
And that locked silence which so far had ruled,  
Yielded its unseen bars to strains of sweet  
Refreshing harmony, which soothed and cooled  
The warm excitement caused by this event.  
The feast was served, the foaming wine imbibed ;  
The lover's cup went round, the air was rent  
With merriment which cannot be described.

The singers who sung first with their instructor  
Sung well in tune when they had had no wine ;  
Bacchus perhaps is not a good conductor

Inoculated fresh from his best vine.

At length, as on the planets down below,  
An exodus to cooler air took place.

In twos and twos where lights were burning low  
They wandered ; touching sometimes face with  
face.

The banquet hall being empty, saving two,  
Time felt, presumably as lovers do  
When they perceive the time has come to woo,  
He must begin ; but how he scarcely knew.

In his position he must not be shy,  
Supposing he felt modest ; so he rose  
And in a gentle voice and tenderly,  
But with some confidence as one who knows

---

His suit is part accepted, he then said,—

‘ Eternity ! my power of speech is gone.  
Like a frail flower whose tender bloom is shed  
By the sun’s scorching heat, that falls upon  
And unopposed steals its feeble life,  
The flower of my poor speech before the gaze  
Of your resplendent beauty, shuns the strife  
And sinks to impotence before its withering  
rays.’

Then clasping close his hands upon his breast  
And leaning forward with slight bended head,  
He seemed to lose the power to say the rest ;  
But, gaining courage, he revived and said,—  
‘ Eternity ! I would that I could say—  
What in me lies. It is an endless train  
Of nourished hopes and fears, that on me prey :

Hopes, like the new-born flowers in summer rain,  
Full blooming even now, yet of frail life,  
Until you ratify your plighted love.  
Eternity ! say you will be my wife ? '  
So saying, he moved nearer to her throne  
And watched her eyes, whose glances fixed  
above,  
Seemed searching for a reason to postpone  
Responding to Time's vehement appeal.  
Becoming modesty her manner clothed,  
Which strengthened his desire, and made him  
feel  
He could not rest until they were betrothed.  
She spoke not, but he saw her tender frame  
Like chords of music when the sound steals  
forth.  
Emotion in her trembled like a flame,

---

Which made him rise, and his right hand hold  
forth,  
Exclaiming in high key, yet dulcet tones,  
‘ Celestial angel ! say you will be mine ? ’  
Her hand responded, and in semi-tones  
Of that peculiar sweetness feminine,  
Which gives to life a thrill of exquisite  
Sensation, worth a thousand years without,  
(By which Time’s nature, oh ! so like is it  
In all, was by Eternity drawn out),  
The music of her heart awoke his ear  
And banished from his soul its chill reserve ;  
Dismissed for ever all his doubt and fear  
And gave him her for ay to love and serve.  
Eternity stepped gently from her throne  
And on her lips received a lingering seal  
To this great compact.

‘Never more alone!’

Time loud exclaimed. ‘My life will now be real,’  
So saying, he looked down and smiled on her  
A smile born of the fullest happiness,  
Which would on him for evermore confer  
The highest of delights and blissfulness.

This episode well ended, both walked out  
And weaved their voices in between the rest  
Of those which bloomed with melody and song.  
The eyes of some who met them showed they  
guessed

That love’s sweet drama was not very long.

The closer friends Eternity retained  
Read, in the two being joined, what had occurred,  
And came with feelings warm and unrestrained  
To wish her every joy. The news so stirred  
The sentiments of all in her domain,

---

That ere great Time and she had wandered far,  
Great cheering rose, and rose, and rose again,  
Until the air, with the repeated jar  
Of cheer defeating cheer, was so upheaved,  
That like Poseidon and Æolian fight,  
Which worked the ocean into black and white,  
It shook and trembled like a damsel grieved  
By some deep lover's sorrow unrelieved.  
Before the shouts had spent their utmost sound  
The other lovers' sighs were no more breathed ;  
But an immense excited throng came round  
And with their lifted wings Time's forehead  
wreathed.  
Her fondest friends Eternity upraised  
And singing bore her to ethereal heights.  
Time would not leave her. He still fondly gazed,  
And spreading too his ample wings, the flights

They flew he followed, until coming near  
The banquet-hall, where fresh repasts were  
spread,  
They both descended midst a mighty cheer  
Of welcome, tears of fullest joy being shed.  
The temper of the banqueters had changed ;  
Nor Time nor his beloved were they the same.  
The Avenger was himself and not estranged  
As when he came. He called his love by name,  
And said it in a way that showed so well  
That his poor heart had found a resting place.  
He seemed to speak with all and try to tell  
How happy now he was ; how he'd found grace.  
The thrones were empty, and they sat among  
The merry revellers who drank their health ;  
Time stood the centre of a lively throng  
Inflated by his new acquiréd wealth.

' My worthy friends,' he said, ' I will propose  
A toast, the proudest of my lengthened life.'

He raised his bowl on high, while pressing close,  
They flocked around him and his future wife.  
The company entire, like autumn winds  
Stripping their vestments from the shivering trees,  
Rose like an angry storm, whose power unwinds  
And grows into a gale by quick degrees.  
A thousand tankards sprang above their heads,  
To float upon a sea of wine-born cheers,  
Which ript the air and seemed to leave in shreds  
The mouths that shouted, till the eyes dropt tears.  
Songs to Anchises and winged Eros filled  
The wine-clad air with joyous strains of mirth.  
Eternity passed here and there, and many  
spilled  
What they would drink, in trying to give birth

To long word compliments in praise of her.  
The male surroundings of her graceful court  
Sang bacchanalian songs, and tried to stir  
Time's nature till it was so deeply wrought  
And moved to its profoundest depths, that he,  
In stentor tones, raised up his time-worn voice  
And made the banquet-hall with melody  
Resound. These songs of revelry so choice  
At length wore out entire their origins,  
And one and all exhausted sobered down.  
Time seeing this, and that the hairy chins  
Of older men, with wider spread renown,  
Were shelved upon their hands to rest the head,  
He parleyed with Eternity and said,—

‘ My noble friends ! Eternity commands  
Me to stand forth and unreserved declare

---

Her deepest gratitude. At your kind hands  
We have received attention, we both share,  
So far surpassing our highest thought,  
That for Eternity and me I say  
We are truly grateful. 'Those who brought  
Me with such care along the charming way,  
Which leads direct to this enchanted spot,  
Will feel, I hope, that what I do not say  
E'en measures more my gratitude than what  
My poor untutored eloquence declares.'

With this, Time spread his hands and thanked  
them all,  
And the assembly, as they came, in pairs  
Filed out, leaving two only in the hall.  
Eternity and Time, now better known  
Each to the other; she like a creeper

Made her beginnings, as she might have grown  
Had she been ivy, and he her keeper  
The solid oak. She laid her slender arms  
In leaning loveliness and on him pressed.  
He, warm reception gave her matchless charms  
And kissed her, fondly pillow'd on his breast.  
Two halves of Nature seeking long to meet  
Each in the other, like Phœbus in the flower  
Of some fair rose, by touching kindled heat  
And gave to life its highest, fiercest power.  
Her eyes and his in one sensation mixed,  
And for a moment they were lost in sense ;  
She, as the ivy round the oak, was fixed  
In his herculean yet loving arms, whence  
A disentanglement no favour found  
In him or her. At length, like Nature's rose  
Whose leaves are falling on the parent ground,

---

Their love had partly bloomed. The deepest  
throes  
Of love's immeasurable heav'nly bliss  
Were yet unfathom'd, and to her unknown.  
The bloom was only gone, the virgin kiss ;  
Love's flower was in the bud, not yet full grown.  
Time sighed and fondly looked on her again,—  
' My darling angel ! we must part a while,'  
Said he, and rising with a gentle strain  
He raised her hand and kissed it with a smile.

' Eternity ! the laws of heaven demand,  
That man and woman must submit to be,  
According to the laws of every land,  
Together joined with fitting ceremony :  
We must be married. I will to my home  
With my good friends who wait in yonder ship.

Stay here a while, sweet love, and while you  
roam

In this divine domain, I'll make my trip,  
And have prepared a vast and splendid show,  
Of which the head shall be my angel queen ;  
A *marriage-show* Eternity ! We'll go  
Through space infinite. Never has there been  
Of all the pageants since creation dawned  
Procession like to this I shall prepare !'

Again he fondled her and softly fawned  
Upon her, smoothing with his hand her hair.

'Good Time, my life is changed,' she said, and  
sighed ;

'Your coming has brought something dear to me.'

Her tender feelings melted and she cried,  
And looked upon him with simplicity.

‘ The time we are parted, love, will be so brief,’  
He said, in a half plaintive, whining tone ;  
‘ While I am gone my life will all be grief.  
My heart will feed on hope while I’m alone,  
When sweet Diana comes in her white gown  
To bid Dame Chaos raise her dusky veil,  
I’ll wake, and bid her weave a lovely crown  
Of Phœbus’ choicest rays, and I’ll not fail,  
My pretty queen, to have it in due time  
To sit enthroned upon your maiden brow,  
To throw before its gleam, when we shall climb  
The gilded heights of heaven, a shining prow  
To our great marriage train. Now we must part.  
Eternity, call out your noble court  
And let me say adieu before I start.  
They are so kind, your friends ; I feel, in short,  
As if I’d lived here many joyful years.

I've been so happy these few merry days,  
And now as the dread hour for parting nears  
My soul burns dim ; in mourning are its rays.'

' Dear Time,' she said, ' what is to be, must be,'  
And, calling her attendant, bade her tell  
The members of her court to come and see  
Time go, and take affectionate farewell.  
Eternity's great suite spread o'er the plain,  
And Time's escort, who brought him to his love,  
Made ready to escort him back again.  
His chariot cloud descended from above,  
And he in his best language thanked them all.

' My friends,' he said, ' my noble sires and  
dames !  
It's usual when one can use you all,

---

And be familiar with your Christian names,  
To say good-bye and take a friendly leave  
Before I go and part from you a while.  
I do not hide from you how much I grieve.  
My heart is sad, and yet it is futile  
To water useless thoughts with wasted tears,  
And grieve o'er pleasures that have run to seed.  
To sow enjoyment's seed to me appears  
Rather a wiser toil. Our time, indeed,  
Is always better spent in looking straight  
Into the future, where our life to come  
Must be ploughed up and sown ; e'en then our  
fate  
Will much depend on how we reap. Welcome !  
You said to me so kindly when I came ;  
To you, my friends, I bid a fond farewell.  
Eternity now soon will take my name.'

At this there rose a shout and frantic yell  
Of endless cheers, which rent the startled air.  
Repeated oft, and gathering greater strength,  
Such joyous sounds before were never there.  
Throughout the breadth of her domain and  
length  
Ran messengers to tell the happy news ;  
And 'mid excitement never more intense  
All honor'd them with compliments profuse.

‘ At last,’ said Time, ‘ my friends, farewell ! I  
hence,  
Indeed, must go. Eternity, good-bye  
Once more, good-bye. A little while, my love ;  
*Only* a little while, *Eternity !* ’  
The loving fingers parted, and above  
His chariot cloud sailed steadily away.

The music of sweet voices filled the air,  
And as his eyes looked fondly on the grey  
Cold mist that shrined his love, he thought of  
their  
Great happiness which he should now prepare.  
The gentle elves who formed Time's charming  
suite  
Were all well known to him, and seemed to  
share  
In his delight, and think it quite a treat  
To follow in his train, and see him safe  
Returned on board among his waiting crew ;  
Who must, Time thought, have now begun to  
chafe,  
And like all other wights want something new.  
So on they sped, until at length they reach  
The same old spot where they all met before.

Time's gratitude o'erflowed. He hoped that  
each

Would join Eternity, when to his shore  
She came. 'Farewell, my friends,' he said,  
'good-bye!'

And disappeared with rapid downward flight,  
As from a mountain's summit in the sky  
An eagle races with the morning light.

His soul renewed, his whole vitality  
Responded to his newborn joy in life,

As those must feel who immortality  
Receive to compensate for deadly strife

And years of pain and trouble here below.

Descending from the paradise on high,  
Time soon perceived the restless, shifting glow  
Which moving waters picture from the sky.

No ship was seen, no crew, no signs of life :

Time traversed leagues and leagues, 'twas all  
the same.

He thought with anguish of his future wife,  
And trembled like a reed throughout his frame.  
'Oceanus!' he called, but called in vain.  
The waters answered not, nor sight nor sound.  
He strained his eyes till straining gave them  
pain,

Until he feared he surely must be drown'd.  
Time's power was great, but not so great that he  
Omnipotent could be. Where was his crew?  
Poseidon had perhaps enraged the sea  
And clean destroyed them all, because he knew  
Time would return and might their aid require.  
These thoughts ran through his agitated mind  
When something caught his eye. A speck of  
fire

Seen far away ; the lantern of some kind  
And succouring friend perhaps in search of him.  
It grew and multiplied full many times,  
And like a comet swiftly seemed to skim  
Across the sea. Like iron on flint, sometimes  
It struck a shower of sparks, which lighted far  
The water and the heavens with glowing fire.  
It hurried on ; it was a golden car ;  
He saw Poseidon and the golden tyre,  
And mane and hoof that he had seen before.  
He looked enraged as if he did pursue  
Some enemy he hotly hated and would kill.  
As he approached the power he wielded grew ;  
The trident grew, and seemed Time's mind to fill  
With some suspicion that Poseidon meant  
To take revenge. Time now perceived his eye  
Fixed straight on him. He saw his full intent

---

And raised himself while Poseidon rushed by.  
‘ The curséd of all curséd on this sea ! ’  
Cried Poseidon, with features puffed with ire,  
And rein’d his chariot round that he might see  
Where Time had flown. The burning brilliant  
fire  
Which Poseidon created with his speed  
Half blinded him. Time was, however, there,  
And calmly waited, taking little heed  
Of this great burst of anger, till the glare  
Of light had disappeared. At length he spoke,  
And asked Poseidon if he’d seen the ship.  
Poseidon heaved with rage as if he’d choke.  
He curs’d and swore and bit his under lip,  
And challenged the Avenger to a fight.  
‘ Your ship is smashed,’ he said; ‘ your crew are  
drowned,

And I will have revenge! It is my right!'

Time hearing this flew gently round and round,  
And watching seized a portion of the car.

Poseidon raised his trident for a blow  
But missed his aim. So heavy was the jar  
That he upset himself, when Time let go,  
And seizing Poseidon well round the waist  
A deadly struggle brought out all their strength.

The chariot moved; the horses in their haste  
To gather speed fell their full sprawling length  
Upon the boiling sea. Both fiercely tugged,  
Urged by Poseidon to drag on the car.

With biting grip the deities both hugged;

They seemed to be about upon a par.

Poseidon wrenched and pulled and dragged  
and tore,

And slashed his trident in the surging sea.

The more Time pinched, the more Poseidon  
swores.

'Tell where my ship is, and I'll let you be,'  
Said Time, as well as he could speak between  
Spasmodic efforts to take in the air.

'Let go!' Poseidon howled. 'You hurt my  
spleen!'  
And turning quick he seized Time by the hair.

'Let go! you villain!' Time roared in his turn,  
And shook Poseidon till he could not speak.  
Their blood waxed hotter, and each tried to spurn  
With all his might the other, when a leak  
Sprang in the car, and both these heroes stood  
Waste deep in water fighting to the death.

Poseidon kicked and slashed, and thought he  
should

Make Time give in at last for want of breath ;

But the Avenger held his ocean king

With such uncompromising, steady grip,

His arms around him like an iron ring.

The more he kicked were less inclined to slip.

At last Time spoke inside his angry soul,

Stirred by fears of a coming tragic end,

And muttered with a gruff and rumbling roll

A thick set oath that he would shortly rend

In shivering shreds this monster of the deep.

‘ Wilt cease thy throbbing throes ! ’ Time yelled.

‘ NO ! ’ roared Poseidon, as with raving leap

He made a frantic effort ; but Time held

Him with such fixed and unrelaxing clutch

That like two trees as saplings inter-grown  
They quivering stood. Said Time, ' By Jove !  
Is such  
This devil's damnable design ! I own  
If his intent is loss of him or me,  
Then my past centuries of spended power  
And all the flower of my best energy  
Shall be revived and centred in this hour.'  
So saying, with gigantic heave he tore  
Poseidon from his grip upon the car,  
And hurled him howling on the chariot floor.

' Hell's flame-points paint with rankling, fester-  
ing scar  
Your curséd ugliness,' said Time, who seized  
The heated trident of his humbled foe,  
And smashed it with one blow, and thus appeas'd

His deep volcanic wrath. Time then, with slow  
Close-watching look, the crushed Poseidon ey'd,  
Who panting lay with scowling, fiendish stare,  
And might for aught the other cared have  
died.

The mast-high bright and piercing flare  
Which Poseidon's great car stirred in the sea  
Fell on the eyeballs of Oceanus,  
Who had for days with great anxiety  
The ocean searched. Directions various  
He had pursued without or rest or sleep.  
Time saw the ship as it was changing tack.  
The brilliant glare reflected from the deep  
Fell on the spreading sails, which threw it back.  
Time raised himself and gave a mighty shout,  
When Poseidon rose too ; but he was done.  
If not before, his master he'd found out.

He'd fought with Time, and Time the fight  
had won.

Each kept a watch upon the other's eye,

The index of the living thoughts within.

Time told Oceanus to keep the ship close by,

And have his quarters fit to take him in.

' Now, then, Poseidon, shall we part as friends  
Or foes ? I am of those who are fond of peace ;  
But, Time's determination never bends  
Where there's injustice. Let ill-feeling cease.'

Poseidon drew the anger from his face

And loosed the floes of rage which Time had  
froze

Around his shrunken soul. His earn'd disgrace

Weighed heavily, like grief on one who knows

The weight is wages for the work he's done ;  
But Justice made her voice heard in his heart.

'We've fought,' said Poseidon, 'and you have  
won :

I know it was my fault. Before we part  
I beg you, puissant Time and all your crew,  
To wash your memories in this virgin sea ;  
Forget the past. Let not the minds of you  
And your brave comrades think the worse  
of me

For letting my strong nature rule my will.'

Then each the other's hand with friendly grasp  
Enclosed, while all the ship's crew, standing still,  
Close watched till each relaxed his tightened  
clasp.

'Farewell,' said Time, 'I hope when next we  
meet  
Each may the other serve with friendly aid.'

Poseidon bowed and Time made his retreat,  
Full satisfied to seek the cooler shade  
On board his ship. The unsurled sails out-  
spread

And forward on her path the ship proceeds;

Poseidon baled his car and drove ahead,

Thus ending peacefully these tragic deeds.

Oceanus and Ambofilius came,

The sailors also, open-mouth'd and ey'd,

Surrounded Time and whispered loud his  
name.

'Where has Time been!' they then with  
wonder cried.

‘ We all have feared that Time had been destroyed,’

Oceanus exclaimed, as he embraced  
The proffered hand Time gave him, everjoyed  
To find what he had searched for in such  
haste.

Then Time narrated all he’d done and seen.  
He spoke of all the wonders there on high.

He said, ‘ My friends, one day you’ll see my  
queen ;

You’ll see my bride, my wife, Eternity ! ’

At mention of this name his figure shook.  
The crew all raised their arms and cheered and  
cheered,

Moved to the demonstration by his pleased look.

Time asked Oceanus where now he steered.  
‘Put the ship straight for home, my worthy friend,’  
Said Time. ‘Spread out at once your largest  
sails

And let this voyage quickly near its end.  
The work I shall administer entails  
The funding of much thought, and measurement  
Of divers things momentous to my plans.  
I hope good Ambofilius is content?’  
Said Time, as he embraced and shook his hands.

I said, ‘Indeed, we’ve had an anxious time.’  
Within myself I did not feel content,  
And thought in fact ’twas something like a  
crime  
That he should leave me when to Heaven he  
went.

When asked about these things, I plainly told  
His majesty I did not like the way  
He had retired and left me in the cold.  
I wished to hear what he had got to say.

‘ Good Ambofilius, come with me below ;  
I much regret the tedious time you’ve had.  
I must confess, when I was called to go  
With Æolus, I was so nearly mad  
And smitten with a frenzy of delight  
That, like a startled wave upon the shore,  
Or a bright star that’s quenchéd in the night,  
My memory simply died, and I no more  
Held in my head the reins, but of one sense.  
That sense, good Ambofilius, you know well ;  
To me it was a stranger then ; not now !  
My worthy friend, there is no parallel

---

Throughout the regions where Inheritance  
Has given to all the senses power to grow,  
Between that one of love and any other.  
It is a flame no power in heaven can smother.'

'I saw the flame burn bright, good Time, in you.  
Your face was radiant when that form appeared ;  
And as one saw her with a clearer view,  
The hearts of all on board were lost. I feared,  
Indeed, I might myself have lost all sense,  
So bright and lovely was that angel face.'

Time smiled, and said, 'I had full recompense  
In visiting her heavenly dwelling-place.'

The ship sailed on and we were straightway  
bound

For Time's domain, when one fine sunny morn  
Oceanus asked Time what he had found,  
Thus manifesting that desire inborn  
Which marks the race. The ship's crew  
gathered round,  
And Time, the greatest hero they had known,  
By virtue of his latest great exploit,  
Seemed to stand higher, as if he felt he'd  
grown  
In stature since his clever and adroit  
Ascent to heaven, and subsequent defeat  
Of one whom all admired for his prowess.

' My worthy friends,' said Time, ' I will repeat  
Of what I saw, some things. You cannot guess,  
Nor could the finest poet's finest lines  
Portray the perfect splendour of the scenes.

When coming near the point of heaven's  
confines,  
A tempered frame of clouds the beauty screens.  
I near the hallowed entrance filled with fear,  
Tho' all seemed peaceful in its glory there.  
As I approached the fairy forms appear  
Of angels floating in the buoyant air.  
Perceiving me, the sounds of perfect song  
Unfold their balanced parts and fill the ear  
With such entralling, captivating, strong,  
And sense-encharming coil, that, save a tear  
Which burst from my enraptured spell-bound  
soul,  
I was entranced.'

' So wonderful, good sire ! '

Oceanus remarked ; ' pray, do proceed,

And tell us all you saw ; we beg the whole,  
If you will satisfy a keen desire  
Which animates us all on board, indeed !'  
So hearing, with pursed mouth and knitted brow,  
Time leaned his massive form against the mast,  
And thus related at his leisure how  
He reached Eternity's domain at last.

' My worthy friends,' said Time, ' you saw me  
leave.

The noble Æolus gave friendly aid,  
And I must tell you that I sadly grieve  
(For fighting does all fighters much degrade)  
For my encounters with Poseidon's might.  
We gave no cause of quarrel ; that you know.  
'Twas he begun ! 'Twas he desired the fight !  
He fought ; and when you came was glad to go.'

---

At this a thundering cheer went up aloft,  
And eyes on eyes with satisfaction fed.  
Time smiled with much delight also and coughed  
To clear his throat for what he had not said.

‘ I said before, the music there was grand.  
You’ve seen, my friends, great Helios in full burn,  
When he looks straight at you ; but you can’t  
stand,  
And with your little eyes outstare his stern,  
Creating, penetrating, warming light ?  
From your imaginations sweep the dust  
And picture Erebos’s darkest night.  
Think further, and remove the gather’d rust  
Which your dull life gives your intelligence.  
Think of the brightest moon that sits the  
heavens,

With ten times brighter glow, yet with intense,  
Not overpowering warmth and light, which  
leavens

The heat and power that Helios might dispense  
If he had reached full age and strength and light.

Those regions up above seem never cold.

I saw no rain ; I felt no chilly night ;

I saw no painéd young, no suffering old.

The life up there seemed full of joy and mirth.

I saw them always laughing ; not a cry

Of heart-sore weeping ever found its birth

In that fair land, where no one lives to die.

The morning and the evening seemed to be

Like man and wife below, conjoined in one.

A measured warmth, with light enough to see,

Accompanied the evening as the morning had  
begun.

---

A friendly feeling reigned, no enemies  
Made discord ; but the harmony maintained  
Bloomed in perennial amenities,  
Like sweetest perfume for all time sustained.  
The road we traversed when I first set out  
Was like a picture, where all things are  
made  
Of choicest form and kind. I looked about  
But saw no traces in the deepest shade  
Of dawning death or lingering decay.  
All things looked bright and fresh and clean  
and new.  
Equality in life as in the endless day,  
Expelled degrees, to make each one of you,  
When your turn comes, as high in heaven's  
domain  
As the imperial Cæsar of the sphere

In which my friend hopes to enjoy again  
The pleasures he does not discover here.'

Time looked at Ambofilius as he spoke,  
And their eyes held a converse dress'd with smiles.  
Time's friend remembered well when he awoke  
And found himself in his great hall erewhiles.

I said, 'I hope, good sire, as time goes on,  
The same kind friend who brought me to your  
hall,  
Whoever is the estimable person,  
Will not forget that he is bound to call  
And rid you of your guest in proper time.'

'Fear not, my friend,' said Time, 'rest well  
assured

That when you've had enough of this dull clime,  
You'll be reclaimed and not at all injured.'

With this Time then resumed his narrative.

' We passed through lands of crystal purity ;  
The eye deep revelled in the changing scene.

All things enjoyed a fixed maturity,

As if from the beginning they had been  
Perfection finished for all time to last.

The angel elves who charmed me by the way

Were fashioned like to you ; but each was cast

In such a perfect mould, in such refined array,

That the delighted eye grew dim to see

Such matchless beauty in society.

My friends, you weary with the things I tell ? '

A rustling of desire ran through the crowd

As Time said this. His words were like a spell.

He saw it, and felt naturally proud.

The theme to him was like the sun in heaven,  
It warmed, it cheered, it gave his soul a life,  
Which nothing else in his career had given.

He raised his hands sometimes and said, ‘ My  
wife ! ’

In accents which like thunder spoke within ;  
But not a sound came from his love-sick breast.  
He thus discoursed and would again begin,  
When one man cried, and then cried all the rest,  
‘ The land ! The land ! Our native shore again ! ’

The scene now changed, the gathering dispersed.  
All order disappeared, none could restrain  
Their eagerness to disembark the first.  
All crowded in the ship’s capacious bows  
To gaze upon the throng that lined the shore.

They knew Time's coming home would surely  
rouse

Greater enthusiasm than they had seen before.  
Oceanus his orders loudly roared,  
To get attention from his underlings.

He knew full well that such a scene aboard  
Is what so often some big blunder brings.

I thought, I am coming back to this bright spot,  
But what my future is I've no idea ;

'Twas useless asking Time if he knew what  
Was to become of me. He'd say, my dear,  
Have patience and enjoy your little hour,  
The future will reveal what is your fate.

I should reply, my dear, if I'd the power,  
I should prefer at once to emigrate.

These gorgeous paradises don't suit me ;  
I feel acutely my position here.

---

If this is what they call equality,  
I'd rather in my world be made a peer.  
The sight along the shore was very grand ;  
Time's suite entire had come to welcome him.  
Some stood, some sat upon the sand,  
And others waded out who could not swim.  
The sailors signalled with their lifted hands,  
And like a cluster of dressed summer trees  
The captain hung his masts with flags and  
bands  
Of tapering streamers, which by small degrees  
Waved into nothing, like the green ribb'd sea  
As distance makes each wave a smaller size.  
Time overjoyed that he successfully  
Had found a wife, cast up his grateful eyes  
As if he looked upon a higher power,  
Expressing many thanks for his success.

He came upon the shore ; it was the hour  
Of full mid-day. Great Helios in his dress,  
A million miles of flame, sent fiery darts  
O'er coruscating sea and glittering sand,  
And each of Time's great retinue upstarts  
At his approach ; the nearest kissed his hand.  
All circled round him in a surging mass  
Like water whirling in a punctured pool.  
They came so close the Avenger could not pass,  
And felt the opposite of very cool.  
Time told Oceanus to come on shore  
And let his people follow close behind.  
He went with Ambofilius on before,  
And as they walk and talk and gently wind  
About and through up hill and down the dale,  
Time said, 'My friend, I must now quick prepare,  
And you must help me, for I cannot fail

To have all things arranged in such a rare  
And perfect style as never in this land  
Was seen before. I shall call up the gods  
And ask the greatest powers that be, to band  
Together for my show, and I'll lay odds  
The marriage of Eternity with me  
Shall bring more eyes in line than an eclipse,  
When Luna and great Helios chance to be  
So near that he can snatch with his thick lips  
A passing kiss.' So saying he turned round  
And halted on the summit of a hill.  
'Good Ambofilius, you know this ground ?'

'Indeed, I do,' I said ; 'its beauties still  
Hold me entranced as when I saw them first.'

Time said, 'Send on my people ; let them go

---

Before into my halls and slake their thirst,  
While I from here prepare for my great show  
By calling on the gods. Stand by my side.'

Then with majestic mien and stately pose,  
With head erect and mantled in his pride,  
One hand he hipped, the other up he throws,  
And speaking with a voice tuned by his love,  
He calls upon his brother gods above.

'Up, Boreas ! distend your northern ears !  
Blow out the trumpets of your frigid zone  
And wake creation ; for 'tis many years,  
I'll wager, since you heard, and you will own,  
When you have heard it in befitting rhyme,  
'Tis strange what I shall tell. Wake ! Boreas,  
wake !

And gather for this once from every clime  
Your sleeping winds, and let them for my sake  
Pay homage, for 'tis I who call, old Time.  
Send out your messengers to east and south,  
Tell west to blow and ope' your northern mouth.  
Let circling storms bear on their wingéd wings  
The joyful news, that all may join my suite.'

'What is the joyful news that good Time  
brings ?'

Said Boreas, as he lighted on his feet.

'The news, my worthy friend ! just hearken you.  
I've been to heaven ! the glorious paradise ;  
I've had real angels in my retinue ;  
I've seen, my worthy friend, with my own eyes  
Such wonders, Boreas, as to you or me

---

Are wonders of perfection's perfect type.  
I took my friends and sailed across the sea  
To find a wife. My plans are nearly ripe  
To bring my marriage to the joyful end.'

'A wife!' said Boreas; 'Have you found a wife?'

'Ay! have I!' cried he, with an upward bend  
Of his eyebrows, which showed his lengthened  
life

Had gained in strength since he was last at  
home,

Which made him think 'twas good sometimes to  
roam.

'I want the gods of our fraternity  
To lend their presence to adorn my suite.  
My love, the sweet, the pure Eternity,

Will journey to a spot where we shall meet.  
Now, Boreas,' said Time, ' will you assist,  
And ask the brother gods to my great feast ?  
Don't take refusal ; mind, you must insist  
That all, the most exalted and the least,  
Do me this honour. Now, Boreas, hear  
What further I shall say. The gods must come.  
Then next the goddesses must all appear.  
You should bid Jupiter a good welcome ;  
Ask Mars and Bacchus, Mercury and Sol.  
My friend Poseidon, and the low Hades  
For this event perhaps you may enrol,  
Together with Hephaestus, if you please.  
Eternity, I'm sure, will Venus choose  
For her surpassing loveliness and grace ;  
At least, 'tis my belief ; for he who woos  
Values perhaps the most a pretty face.

---

Another queenly consort is Juno.  
Her rank among the goddesses is high ;  
She's female Jupiter in heaven, you know,  
And keeps her sex in order generally.  
Give these a call good Boreas ; let each  
Hear from you, polished phrase in copious  
showers,  
In your best colours, like a painted speech.  
Bid them all come in language's best flowers.  
Aurora and Diana should come next ;  
We must of course have these to light the way.  
If they are not first, I hope they'll not be vexed ;  
Not being in front will not affect their ray.  
Then for domestic comfort we should take  
The gentle Hestia of the hearth and fire ;  
She would be useful if we wished to bake  
Our bread at home. Then Leto would aspire

To take her place not very far behind.  
The mother of Apollo must be placed  
As near as possible where she's inclined.  
In this, good Boreas, you'll try and suit her taste.  
Eternity, I think, would like some one  
Of fibrous will to counsel her and serve her ;  
A sort of warrior without a gun.  
We'll send an invitation to Minerva.  
And, Ambofilius, there's a dame for you.  
She knows your earth, her feet have kissed its  
floor.'

‘Perhaps she’ll take me back,’ I said. ‘Oh ! do,  
Pray, ask her when she can, if I’m a bore.’

‘She’s goddess of your green meats and your  
berries,

---

And decks her head with poppies and bright corn;  
In Greece she's Demeter, in Rome she's Ceres,  
She will my suite most charmingly adorn.  
I don't know when she last went to your earth  
Just ask her, Boreas, when she is going again.  
'Tis not unlikely she might think it worth  
Her while to take you back for some rich gain.'

'Rich gain, indeed!' I said. 'I shall not pay:  
A goddess surely needs no such reward.  
I'll be protector; she can show the way,  
That's all the payment that I can afford.'

Time smiled and said, 'Protector!' I smiled too.  
'She needs no helmsman when she goes, my  
friend.

If either is to guard, she'll watch o'er you,

And see you safely to your journey's end.  
Now, Boreas, are our noble guests complete ;  
Who is there more to make our list replete ?  
Great Æolus, of course, must find a place,  
And if we take with us the big heroes,  
Why should we not the smaller ones embrace ?  
There's Aphrodite's son, the wing'd Eros ;  
Then there's the great Apollo, god of song—  
And Circe, Helios' daughter, with her arts.  
The Muses we must have to swell the throng  
And give a balance to the various parts.'

'Besides the men of courage there are shy men,'  
Remarked Boreas, ' who no doubt will follow.  
What say you to the handsome youth called  
Hymen,  
Bearing his bridal torch, son of Apollo ? '

---

‘Follow, indeed! this boy must go in front!  
The god of weddings, like the chaséd deer,  
Must head the chasers and lead on the hunt,’  
Said Time. ‘See that his fiery torch burns clear.  
While on your round, good Boreas, think of more.  
There’s threefold Hebe to close up the ranks.’

‘If Morpheus comes,’ I said, ‘perhaps he’ll snore,  
And that would not incur your honour’s thanks.’

‘The son of sleep, my worthy friend, must be  
The last of all,’ said Time. ‘He can preside  
At drawing of the curtain, and just see  
That both of us are well tucked up inside.’

‘Well, then, if you achieve too much success,  
You had better have the doctress Nemesis.’

'That's not a bad idea,' said Time. 'Oh! yes,  
We'll have her with us on the premises.'

With this, as far as Boreas was concerned,  
The conference closed. 'Now Boreas, good-bye,'  
Said Time. 'When you have finished you'll  
have earned  
The gratitude of yours faithfully.'

So Time and Ambofilius turned about  
To near his home, when filling both their eyes  
There came a brilliant pageant spreading out  
Of his attendants, meaning to surprise  
Their worshipped master with some choicer gifts.  
The size of his success was now made known,  
And one and all, as when some joy uplifts  
In sudden bound the passive heart, had shown

---

Fresh-kindled eagerness to share with him  
The pleasure he had captured for his heart.  
So as Time turned he heard a joyful hymn  
Spread out its harmony as all took part.  
The fairy maidens of his household came,  
Each nursing fondly in her shapely arms  
The offspring of a thought born of his fame ;  
Which, as they neared, they bore in open  
palms,  
Smiling a prayer that he would kindly take  
This tribute of their gratitude to him.  
He took from all and said, for each one's sake  
With pleasure he received, and to its brim  
His heart responding filled with his best thanks.  
Then mingling with the groups he spoke with all,  
Nor failing in attention to all ranks,  
Gave heed to every individual.

Dispersing slowly, some this way some that,  
The company broke up, and Time retired.

'Come, Ambofilius, let us have a chat,  
And see if our ideas can be inspired,'  
He said. 'Eternity now thinks of me,  
And wonders if the cunning of my mind,  
With shuttle of device, weaves secretly  
The plans I promised she in time should find  
A fabric perfect for the critic's eye.

My embassy, whose chief is Boreas,  
Is on the wing to summon hastily  
My leading guests, and for this glorious  
Occasion I must really find for you  
A noble part. Say, Ambofilius !  
If I bid you elect out of the few  
Best places, be not so punctilious

As to choose the least. Let me fix for you  
A place with Æolus. He is the power  
Who dominates the winds. With him the view  
Would be immense and grand, as on a tower  
You stood upon your earth sky high, to see  
A flight of comets race ten million miles.

‘I fear,’ I said, ‘god Æolus would be  
Indignant to be charged with one who styles  
Himself a denizen from Pluto’s world.’

‘I’ll manage that,’ said Time; ‘you go with  
him.

Mind only, when his bound-up power’s uncurled,  
And you through endless space begin to skim,  
You pay attention to the god’s commands.  
You are not provided with a pair of wings,

And so must keep in mind that he with hands  
Is only safe from falling when he clings.'

'From falling ! thank you,' I remarked with awe,  
'Could I hold on in one of his typhoons ?  
My senses would disperse ; each clutching claw  
Would merge its nature in nebulæ of high  
swoons.'

'That would indeed be a catastrophe,  
The like of which we cannot contemplate,'  
Said Time. 'We must from such disasters be  
Too well protected, sir, at any rate.  
With Æolus you'll have a foremost post  
Well in the van, from which your searching eye  
Can see the most distinguished of the host,  
As they come sweeping through the blazing sky.

---

Time entered now with pensive look his home,  
And thought, were he a scribe of facile pen,  
He'd write an Iliad, and fill a tome  
With deities and angels and real men.

‘ My friend,’ he said, ‘ sharp turning on his heel,  
I feel inspired with what I’ve seen and done.  
When I unlock my memory, I feel  
Such bursting forth, like Helios’ blazing sun,  
Of endless calendars of rarest sights  
And panoramas of celestial deeds,  
That, like your famous Homer, it delights  
Me to loose out my brain, and while it bleeds  
With heated images, dream in the past.  
Can it be real, that I have found a wife ?  
The thought of it is more than too divine.  
I sometimes fear that I might lose my life

Before Eternity is really mine.

Oh, Ambofilius ! had you been with me  
Up there in those bright regions far away ;  
With me to know, to feel, to hear, to see  
That it was true ; all true. That you could say  
In words that I could hear and know were true,  
That all those wonders were no fever'd dream,  
My soul would then find rest.'

‘ To be with you,  
When you were lost to us in that bright beam  
Of heavenly light,’ I said, ‘ was my desire.  
I’ve never ceased to think of all you’ve said  
About those heavenly regions in the skies.’

‘ ‘Tis now too late,’ said Time. ‘ When we are  
wed,

---

And gather flowers from our memories,  
Perchance we shall be able to retrace  
In company the paths which I have seen.  
Eternity's all powerful to transplace  
From lower to the higher realms, I ween.'

' Not such as I,' I said, ' dare ask her aid ;  
Those regions are for men who've ceased to toil,  
And have been ransomed to a higher grade ;  
Who've slipp'd the mortal's chain, and cast its  
coil.

Between my fixéd destiny, and there,  
I see a gulf impassable to me  
While I am mortal and know human care.  
No, Time. I'm not fit for Eternity.'

' Your judgment's wise, like all creation's laws ;

Your speech is purified in Reason's fire,'  
He said. "'Tis true, there must be some such  
pause;  
Perhaps 'tis needed as a purifier.'

The same great hall that held us both before  
Now closed around us with its cooling shades.  
Just like a ship that's launchéd from the shore,  
Time laid him down by slowly following  
grades.

He hailed a servitor, and bid him seek  
Oceanus, and tell him to come in.  
The captain came that we all three might speak  
Of the great project—when it should begin.

Time said, ' Now, Ambofilius, let us hear  
How weddings are conducted on your earth.'

‘With pleasure,’ I replied ; ‘but I much fear  
For you to know our ways is not much  
worth.’

‘Indeed, my friend,’ he said, ‘I *wish* to know !  
Wherever in this universe we live  
The wisest of the wise can always learn.  
In some things we must take, in others give ;  
Each of us can the other help in turn.  
*Oratio veritatis simplex est.*’

‘Marriage,’ I said, ‘with us, begins man’s  
serious life.  
The course he then pursues will be the test,  
And gauge his fitness to possess a wife.  
Unmarried men, beyond a certain age,  
Resemble tossing ships upon the sea

In search of shelter and sure anchorage ;  
They are not happy, if they seem to be.'

' There's something human, then, in me,' said  
Time.

' For centuries my nature's had a thirst,  
That fed upon me as a culprit's crime  
Assails his mind, till it is near to burst.  
A something in me grew that had no room.

My soul was like a heated caged plant,  
That sucked its mother earth to make the bloom,  
And fretted in its heart with fevered pant  
To find the liberty that was denied.

'Tis thus that I've been prison'd and bereft  
Of that for which my soul has vainly cried,  
Like the frail lichen in the rock's dark cleft.  
I've wandered up and down and through all space,

Just as a man whose brain has lost its root ;  
Nothing I heard or saw gave me solace.  
Like a track'd deer the hunter sought to  
shoot,  
I've rushed about pursuing and pursued  
To find a something that was nowhere found,  
And followed as by panther for his food,  
Stealthily nearing without show or sound.'

‘What followed you?’ Oceanus inquired.

‘What *followed* me, Oceanus! A thirst!  
Like that would be if Helios, triple fired,  
Dried up the waters in Poseidon's seas,  
And left the fishes as by plague accursed  
In their last plunging throe, scorched, murdered,  
dead!’

‘The deepest thirst Creation feels or sees  
Is the devouring thirst of love,’ I said.

‘What Ambofilius says,’ said Time, is true.

‘Where blood is born to fill created veins  
The blood breeds love. Its richly purple blue  
No power below or up in heaven restrains,  
When male and female ripening fire the germs,  
Which in them tremble, like a nervous hand,  
Or noon-warm rosebuds fighting with the  
    —  
    worms,

Which eat the choicest shoots as they expand.  
No, sirs, indeed, there’s nothing even in heaven  
Like that great sense. It moves the deities!  
On globes like that from which my friend is  
    driven

---

It shakes great empires, and to me it is,  
As I have said before, a new-born life.  
My home in fact is now a little heaven.  
Like one victorious in a deadly strife,  
I rest content with that for which I've striven.'

'Well, now,' said Time, 'let my good people  
come.

We must have all things ready for the day  
When fair Eternity will meet us. Some  
Can give their ear to what I have to say  
Inside this hall ; but if no place is found  
For all, then some must stay without and hear.  
Give orders that my servitors go quickly round,  
Oceanus, and bid our friends come here.  
While they are gone, pray, Ambofilius, say

What are the customs in your much-loved land  
When kings prepare a royal wedding-day ?'

' A great procession leaves the palace, and  
Moves slow with stately march to music's sound.  
A church, whose top is mantled in the clouds  
Throws wide its doors, and spreading to the  
ground  
Stream draperies of gold. Excited crowds  
Of loyal subjects line the course and cheer ;  
While in the great cathedral may be seen  
Archbishops, bishops, canons ; standing near  
Are minor priests, the chapter, and the dean ;  
Statesmen and heroes, writers, poets, wits ;  
All who claim much renown, both young and old.  
The church is full, the organ plays. There sits  
The king, emblazoned with his jewelled gold.

---

High raised upon a shining starry throne,  
His head is crowned ; his countenance is grave;  
In all the world there's no one more alone.  
He's free ; but 'tis the freedom of a slave.'

'A king a slave!' said Time; 'how can that be?  
He is the last of all to be enslaved.'

'Not bound with chains,' I said ; 'yet he's not  
free.

Upon the face of kings is deep engraved  
The linkéd lines which have enchain'd their  
soul.

Like other mortals born to wealth and power,  
They love to rule those whom they can control,  
While life in them spins out its little hour.

A rumbling in the distance, like a storm,  
Heralds the coming of the future queen.  
  
Line after line, in military form,  
Young, tall, and stalwart soldiers may be seen.  
High raised in air the trumpet mouths declare  
To him, who pale and patient sits and waits,  
That she who fills his heart with loving care  
Speeds on, and is without the church's gates.  
  
Now louder music moves the quivering air,  
And deep and full in measured time unrolls.  
Ten thousand eyes converge on her and stare,  
While brilliant banners, high on lifted poles,  
Bend like the weeds that float upon the sea.  
  
A surging cheer salutes her as she lights  
Upon the soil of God's divinity,  
The battle-field of man's religious fights.  
  
A line of chosen courtiers now precedes

The lady's body-guard, whose gleaming dress,  
Like brilliant flowers in frames of dusky weeds,  
Lights up the mass of human nothingness.

The church is entered and the royal pair  
Make vows to live in lasting continence.

A nation's praises rend the sacred air  
As both in one are merged in permanence.

Rich gifts and wishes flow from every hand,  
And all the world keeps festive holiday.

Loud allelujahs ring throughout the land  
And lend magnificence to the display.'

My words thus ended ; and Time gently rose  
And stroked his beard and looked about the  
ground.

' That is your finest pageant, I suppose ? '

Oceanus remarked, as he turned round.

‘Tis well,’ said Time; ‘my friend has truly told  
What can be done with pageants must depend  
Upon your means. If they are rich and manifold  
Processions once begun need never end.

My worthy friend knows well that on his sphere  
The space and means are on a smaller scale.  
My show will fill the skies ; the front and rear  
Will look like fleets upon a sea, ten thousand sail.’

Time’s servitors had now arrived in force,  
And the Avenger rose and with loud voice  
Bade all who could come in. He said, the source  
Of his great plans should partly be their choice.

‘ Oceanus, bring up your sailor men.  
They’ve faced the dangers of the mighty deep

---

And we will see if they are paler when  
They navigate the air with flightstrong leap.'

Oceanus stood up and said, 'Good sir !  
My men, I'll wager, follow your lead.  
In front of Poseidon not one would stir  
When he was mad with rage and made them  
bleed.'

The multitude overflowed beyond the door,  
And as Time rose the people's voices died  
Down into nothing, as when rain will pour,  
Then quickly stop, as if the heavens had dried.

' My friends,' he said, ' you are, I know, aware  
That my lone life is coming to its end.  
My vow has left the seed and in the air,

Like growing trees, its branches quick ascend.  
My life begun when all things took their rise.  
When first Diana spread her little arms  
And met Aurora with her opening eyes  
My own career begun. The graceful charms  
Of these fair twins my homage soon enthralled ;  
Prudence so far has ruled my destiny.  
  
But there's a time when each of us is called  
By something, which like an epiphany,  
His living soul close haunts with growing  
sense  
Of some enslaved unsatisfied desire.  
'Twas this that burned in me when I sailed  
hence, .  
  
Like an ungovernable raging fire.  
It must have grown and spread for centuries,  
Till such quintessence my soul so enslaved

---

That I pursued ideal effigies  
Which my hot blood on my hot brain engraved.  
My tortured soul at length its bondage burst,  
And spread its wings to find a happier life.  
If my poor fortune ended in the worst,  
I still should only be without a wife.  
I took a Hector's courage and set out;  
My shibboleth was "*Jacta alea est.*"  
Oceanus spreads sail, the sailors shout,  
And full of hopes I steer out to the west.  
My friends, the rest is like a story told;  
A tale of wonder and high-brain'd romance,  
Which I shall ne'er forget though I be old  
By more than I am now, by twice, perchance.'

Time's hearers had sat mute as people dead,  
So earnest were they listening to each thought;

That nothing might conflict with what he said,  
Or hinder them from gaining what they sought.

Resuming his discourse, Time said, ‘ Well, now !  
The time, my friends, is near when we shall meet  
The fair Eternity, and my great vow  
Will also near its end and be complete.’

At this the whole assembly, like a gale  
Of new-born wind beam-ending some great ship,  
Rose up, as if a fleet had spread each sail,  
And shouted one and all a great hip ! hip !  
Hip ! hip ! hip ! hip ! hurrah ! And then, again  
They shouted hip ! hip ! hip ! hip ! hurrah !  
With all their lungs and force and might and  
main,  
Till echoes echoed echoes wide and far.

---

The crowd then broke and mingled, and the roar  
Of their full voices heated in debate,  
To those outside, resembled the great pour  
Of some swift cataract precipitate  
Down plunging many streams in headlong  
bound.

Time spoke with all ; but with a chosen few  
Discussed the plans minutely, till they found  
The object of this long-sought interview.  
The gathering ended and they all dispersed,  
The place of each appointed, and the day  
When all should reassemble and be versed  
Well in his rôle for Time's great wedding day.

The morning of the day selected dawned,  
And Time, and all his suite, came forth prepared  
All gaily decked and marshalled on the laund

Of his domain. They showed that Time had  
cared

For the minutest wants of all his friends,  
And perfect order reigned throughout his suite.  
Like some great general a nation sends  
To foreign lands with their commands, to treat  
For peace or war as circumstances need,  
Time close surveyed each one, that he might see  
How far they were prepared for act and deed  
Like that this day must end triumphantly.

While all were standing like an army drilled  
To keep in perfect line prepared to fight,  
The air changed colour and all round was filled  
With darkness gently veiling o'er the light.  
Beside Time stood his glass with running sand,  
Which held his watchful eye as it ran out.  
At length the grains were ended and his hand

Quick raised aloft showed all the whereabout  
Of the descending host that blacked the sky.  
To meet the leading gods Time spread his wings  
And with him took a glance from every eye,  
As subjects watch the movements of their kings.  
The deities and their great suites came near,  
Creating quite an artificial wind,  
And making all the heavens around appear  
As if their trains extended miles behind.  
Then Æolus and Boreas and their suite  
And all the Boreades lent their aid,  
And raised Time's followers from their feet  
Up level with the rest by gentle grade.  
The gods and goddesses of highest rank  
Now moved into the van of Time's great host,  
And some came up behind till every blank  
Was filled and each at his appointed post.

Then all was ready, and the hero of the day  
Some distance on before took up his place,  
And with a blast that shook the whole array,  
And thundered forth their coming throughout  
space,

This mighty pageant pierced the trembling air.  
The planets with their suns lit up the way  
With treble flare ; the penetrating glare  
Resembling all suns united for that day.  
Diana and Aurora, close to Time,  
Had burnished up their brightness to its best,  
Which made the rays of Helios look like rime  
Of dazzling silver, as they danced upon each  
breast.

Poseidon rode a cloud with wingéd steeds,  
And made his trident breed electric light ;  
His prancing horses filled with golden beads

The heavens around like bright stars in the  
night.

Dame Chaos in her sombre evening gown

Lent contrast to the corruscating glow

Of scintillating sparks, as they came down

From the commotion in its onward flow.

Apollo, with his glittering lyre, was heard

Above the roar of the displaced air

Attuning his great choir, whose every word

Like choral thunder sounded everywhere.

To represent the Muses was Melpomene,

Whose tragic solos charmed the ears of all.

Urania came to personate astronomy ;

Polymnia, Thalia, Clio, and the tall

Erato stiffening Time's old ears to catch

The love-strains she spun from her fruitful  
brain.

The naughty poetess must even hatch  
A little Cupid to enrich the strain.  
Epic and lyric writing there must be  
To make fit records of this great event.  
Calliope epic, lyric Euterpe,  
And there we have the Olympian contingent.  
Great Zeus was there, and looking very studious,  
As if he thought Time's scheme might interfere  
With his position. He called Pluvius,  
And asked that god if he had aught to fear.

While Pluvius and the King of Heaven thus  
spoke,  
A blast from Boreas filled the air around.  
The mighty host, as if from sleep awoke,  
Seemed lifted by the thunder of the sound.  
Straight out in front, as far as eye could reach,

---

A silvery dawn came creeping thro' the mist.  
All eyes were strained to see, the ears of each  
Were bended to the sound by lifted wrist.  
Great silver beams and golden-coloured bars,  
Like shining rays from Helios in the morn,  
Spread through the heavens. Great star-  
decked golden cars,  
By troops of wingéd gleaming angels drawn,  
Came into view, resplendent with the quickening  
light ;  
As if creation's suns had met to be,  
Of all the features in that wondrous sight,  
The one most pleasing to Eternity.

Time's soul now leaped within him, and he said  
In silent speech, ' The angel of my life !  
She comes ! she really comes ! The fearful dread

That she might not perhaps become my wife  
Slow drags its awful weight from off my brain,  
As my eyes reap this harvest for my soul.'

His eyes kept fixed upon the golden plain  
Which looked like gleaming rivers as they roll  
Straight out from many suns in one great  
stream.

Time raised his hands and said aloud to 'me,—

'Oh ! Ambofilius, I know *now* 'tis no dream ;  
I see her coming ! Fair Eternity !'

The van of her great train now clearer shone  
Against the brilliant heavens, distinctly seen.  
Far up above the rest she sat upon  
A crystal throne, a matchless heavenly queen.

---

All round her was a nimbus of fair forms ;  
Great flights of angels soared above her head,  
And far behind in endless, countless swarms  
The train of her angelic followers spread.  
The willing ears of all detect afar  
The stronger sounds of murmuring harmony,  
Which, as each second, like a falling star,  
Throws down its life, breathes their antiphony  
To purify and bathe the nuptial air  
In which these mighty hosts shall celebrate  
that day,  
The union of this high-born heavenly pair.

The heavens all round are now ablaze and gay  
With stars in clusters, moons and suns in  
pairs.

The vault above is striped with dazzling hues,

Whose sparkling radiance every object shares,  
While all around are wide enchanting views.

The hosts now halt, and in extended rows,  
The gods and goddesses in front, the rest be-  
hind.

¶

Like mountain ranges tipped with silver snows,  
Peak after living peak aloft enshrined  
In ámber purity of sun's full ray.  
Eternity's great suite in equal line  
Then bounds the plain, dividing each array,  
To which the tiers in gentle slope decline.

The leading personages on each side  
Now leave their friends, and in the open meet  
For salutation, and that they may guide  
In their due course the functions of each suite.  
Apollo's son the handsome Hymen sings

---

Alone, a strain as signal to the choirs,  
Who poised aloft upon their outstretched wings  
O'erarch with harmony the living spires.  
Beneath is raised a dual nuptial throne,  
With altar flanked by chosen cherubims.  
All being ready, Time comes forth alone,  
His advent heralded by martial hymns.  
Then sweeter strains float on the golden air,  
And shielded by a favoured few is seen  
The fairer half of this illustrious pair,  
Eternity, the chaste celestial queen.  
Then Helios and his kin stir up their fires,  
And all the minor lights shed stronger rays ;  
Resounding harmonies from all the choirs  
With thunder stream to heaven in fullest praise  
As they are joined by solemn marriage tie.  
The potent Æolus and Boreas blow

Their tempered winds to spread throughout the  
sky

The allelujahs, as in force they grow.

The gods and goddesses with choicest gifts  
Crowd round Eternity ; and happy Time

In unfeigned ecstasies his hands uplifts,  
Moved by a sense of joy in him sublime.

Great Jupiter loud thunders throughout space  
And rolls far off his massive monotone,  
Sounding as if the planets in a race  
Struck each the other till one ran alone.

To vary the full glow of Helios' light,  
And match the thunder of great Zeus's lungs,  
God Fulminator sent with peerless flight  
His lightning through the heavens with shoot-  
ing tongues.

Then Pluvius, to cool down the burning sky

---

And let his gentle rain the sunbeams kiss,  
The water frees, o'erarching splendidly  
With coloured bows these realms of perfect bliss.  
Minerva, with Poseidon hand in hand,  
Congratulate with smiles the married pair ;  
While Venus and fair Juno with their band  
Of followers their homage deep declare.  
Time now assists Eternity to rise  
And take the throne intended for his bride,  
While he the other proudly occupies  
Sweet smiling on his consort by his side.  
The great united hosts then change their place,  
And marshal all their strength before the thrones.  
The gods in front with Time are face to face,  
A peerless gathering he frankly owns.

The King of Heaven great Jupiter and Zeus,

---

When silence held full undisputed sway,  
Rose up ; and that he might on them produce  
Impression deep, close bordering on dismay,  
He let his thunder roar loud peal on peal  
Till all the air was heaving like a sea  
Cast from a storm's embrace, and made to reel  
Like the carouser from his revelry.  
Then with proud mien and elevated head  
In measured phrase, deliberate, he said,--

‘ Eternity, great Time, the gods, and men !  
The heavens bear witness that the deed is  
done.  
Two mighty powers are joined, and you,  
    Hymen,  
Should make your torch like Helios' brightest  
sun

---

Shed its clear lustre through infinite space.  
Let god Pluto his largest planet spare  
And there it fix, that every coming race  
May see it burn, and know that it was there  
On that illustrious spot where you now  
stand,  
And where this great assembly looks on me,  
That she in marriage gave to Time her hand,  
The beauteous goddess, chaste Eternity !  
This grand event, my noble sires and dames,  
Illumes creation's history with a sun  
Which lights for ever, on its roll, the names  
Of Time and of Eternity in one.  
In great Creation's name I raise my voice,  
For you and me, to wish them happiness ;  
Inspire your choirs, Apollo, and rejoice  
In hymns and songs of heavenly loveliness ;

So swell your chant that all in heaven may  
hear,  
And their best choirs in fullest song employ.  
Now shake the universe with one great  
cheer,  
And wish our wedded friends much joy.'

•

THE END.





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